

Calvinist Contact

An independent Christian weekly

JULY 27, 1990/45th year of publication/No. 2222

Real estate roller coaster hurts sales people and agencies

Robert VanderVennen

TORONTO — Sellers of real estate and their agencies are deeply distressed by the calamitous slowdown in housing sales that has followed the unprecedented boom market of a year or two ago.

Fred Schuringa, a Mississauga, Ont., real estate broker, was recently forced to declare bankruptcy after having built his business to a staff of 65 employees over 25 years. He is now working with another real estate broker.

Schuringa sees the high interest rates and the economic policies of Marshall Crowe and Michael Wilson as the chief causes of the fact that few people are now buying houses. Clarence Baarda, a real estate agent in Toronto, accented that by pointing out that at today's mortgage rates compared with what he termed a "reasonable" rate of 10 per cent, a homeowner with a mortgage of \$150,000 now pays \$500 more interest a month.

Rent controls in Toronto and government slowness in making serviced land available for building are hindrances to making more housing available, says Schuringa. Further problems for agencies are that banks have become more cautious in their



Signs galore at a time when houses don't sell.

requirements for security, new agents need to take an additional five-week course to qualify for their licence, and Ontario has added extra health



Photo: Bert Wilvoet

insurance costs to the employer. That cost is especially hard for real estate agencies to absorb because 80 per cent of their costs are in salaries, while in

most businesses only 20 per cent of costs is salaries.

See **WIDESPREAD**—p. 2.

Christian union stewards learn how to serve

Ruth VanderWoude

BANFF, Alta. — What do a baker in Vancouver, a nurses' aide in Mayerthorpe, a mechanic in Edmonton, a truck driver in Kamloops,

and a cashier in Calgary have in common? These people, along with 57 others, learned about their common concerns, responsibilities and rewards in a conference held in the cloud-

shrouded magnificence of the Rocky Mountains in Banff.

The first combined Alberta/B.C. Stewards' Conference of the Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC) was held on May 24-26, 1990. It included stewards from Locals 301, 56, 62 and 66, all of whom are involved in the service sector, such as nursing homes, retail and wholesale food services and the transportation sector that carries people (rather than freight).

Stewards are employees who are elected by their fellow workers to be their representatives. They work in conjunction with the local CLAC staff in familiarizing their co-workers with the union's purposes and representation policies, and in communicating with management on behalf of the employees, and dealing with grievance matters. The main purpose of the conference was to provide information to the stewards to help them serve in their roles.

This took place in two ways. The first was a structured format in which seminars were offered. Neil Roos, CLAC's B.C. director, gave a general introduction to CLAC and its roots, principles and vision and expanded on

its history and its national and international involvement. He emphasized the distinct Christian framework out of which CLAC operates and the difference between CLAC and other unions. This was followed by the presentation of four workshops.

Practical solutions

Tom Venema, a psychotherapist

See **CLAC**—p. 2.

Thinkbit

Some people make the mistake of marrying for better or worse but not for good.

Source unknown

In this issue:

Summer reading: Annita Maat humoursly describes an incident in the lives of some Christian teenagers of yesteryear . . . pp. 10-11
Depression is not just "the blues." Three writers talk about mental health . . . pp. 12-14

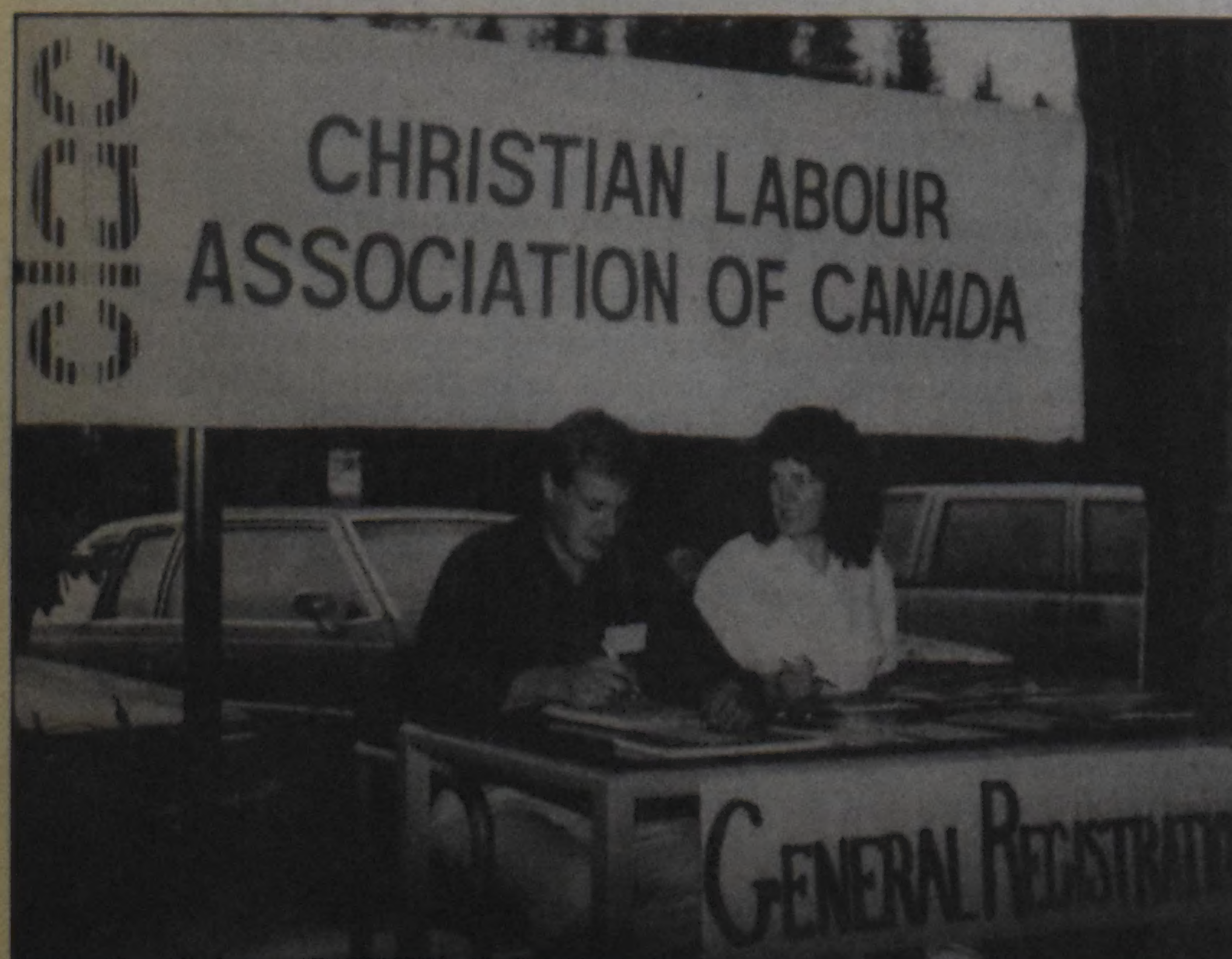


Photo: Courtesy CLAC

From l. to r.: Paul de Jong, CLAC rep, Willie Renema, Steward Save-on-Foods, busy at the registration desk.

CLAC stewards' conference

... continued from page 1.
from St. Catharines, Ont., spoke about conflict and confrontation and dealing effectively with criticism. He outlined different patterns of difficult behaviour and provided coping skills for dealing with each type. On the last day of the conference, Venema presented everyone with some concrete methods of stress management. The stewards felt he had an **excellent grasp of some of the unique difficulties they face** and, despite the diversity of the job environments represented at the conference, they said Venema was able to nail down commonalities and suggest concrete mechanisms of dealing with these situations.

Ed Pypker, CLAC representative working out of the St. Catharines, Ont., office, focused on the grievance procedure, giving sample grievance situations for some hands-on processing in small groups, as well as practice with writing out a specific grievance.

John Kamphof, one of CLAC's B.C. representatives, presented a seminar called "An Ounce of Prevention" (Is a Formal Grievance Always Required?). His emphasis was on developing good labour relations by cultivating an open relationship between management and the union and employees, stressing "preventative" labour relations in which the stewards establish both formal and

informal means of communication. Honesty, knowing the contract (both the legal interpretation and the spirit of the agreement), leadership and full investigation of complaints were discussed as some of the ingredients of good labour (human) relations.

Frank Kooger, also CLAC representative in B.C., led a workshop entitled "Stewards and the Law." Kooger discussed the law in the context of the legal structure which is provided for collective bargaining and specifically how this impacts stewards in the area of fair representation. A sample grievance situation was analysed in terms of the legal guidelines and consequences.

All of the workshops complemented one another well," attendees said. "An Ounce of Prevention" talked about the stewards' task being one of developing and enhancing a good relationship between management, the union and employees.

Personal sharing

In conjunction with this structured setting for learning, the conference also provided the environment for informal learning. As the stewards mixed during meals and socials, as well as during the "free" time built into the conference schedule, they got to know one another and were able to share their own ideas and experiences from their distinct workplaces and thus provide each other with a

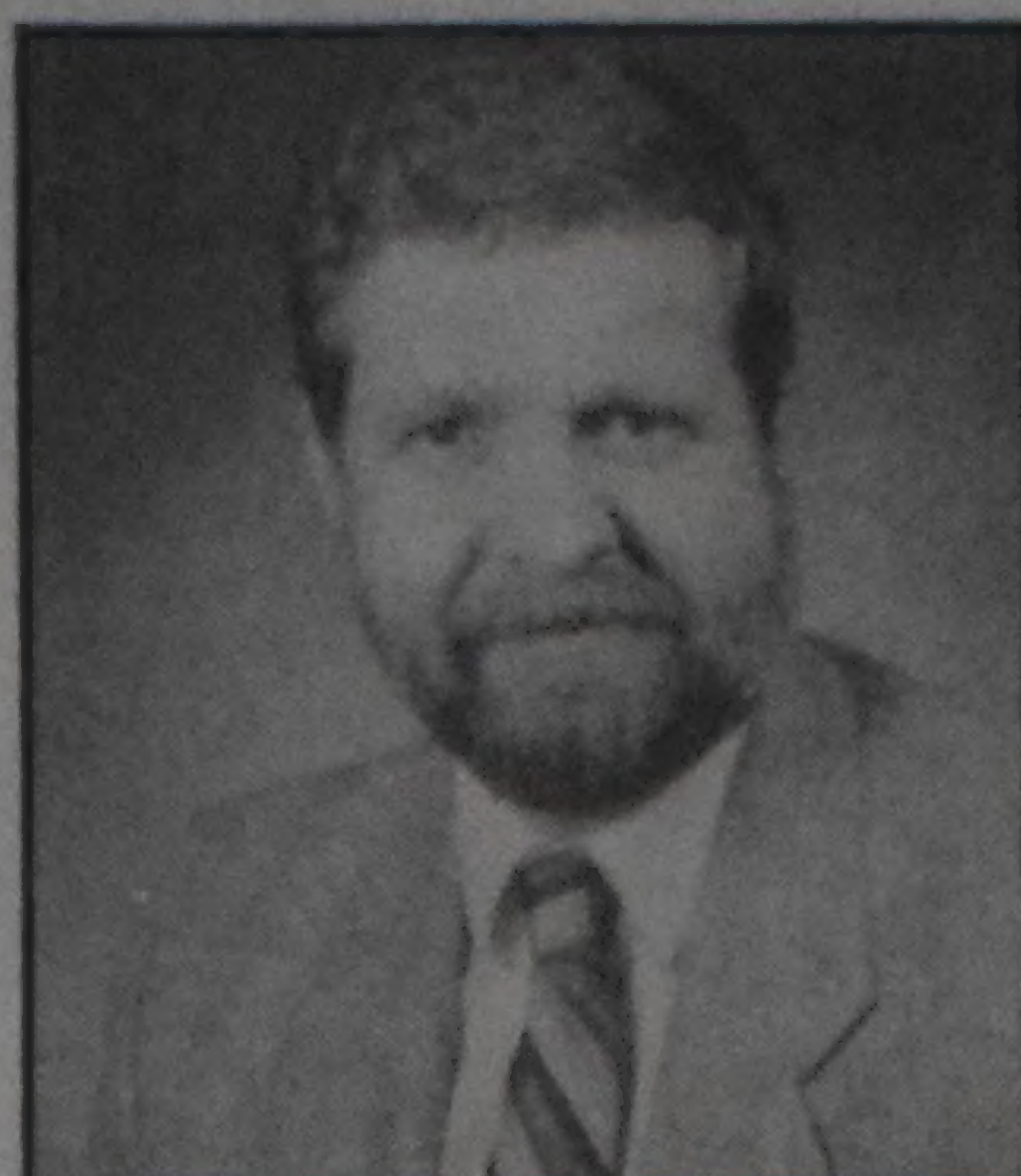
wealth of information. This sharing, they said, also helped to alleviate a common frustration with stewards which is a feeling of isolation and aloneness — "being caught between a rock and a hard place."

Paul de Jong, one of CLAC's Alberta representatives, summarized the conference saying, "The

key to a conference of this type is providing and developing an atmosphere conducive to learning; not just in an academic sense, but in an additionally important interpersonal sense. With the role of steward, several factors come into play; decision-making, managing conflict, monitoring stress, listening skills and interpretation. At a

stewards conference, these realities and many more can be and are addressed, providing the steward with tools."

In general, all those attending the conference, both stewards and staff, came from Banff with a positive experience, they said, and they hope that another stewards conference will take place in the future.



Family Business



Jake Kuiken

Prophetic critics of waste, injustice

Every so often seemingly disparate events come together. On the surface there is no immediate or direct connection, but with some reflection, the events strike a chord and reveal a mind-set, a direction, or perhaps even a vision and priorities. Three things struck such a chord recently.

The first of these events involved a friend who has spent the major part of her life working with persons with mental disabilities. Recently she shared her involvement with Benny George. It's a name many Calgarians will recognize because of the extensive media attention he's received here in the past few months.

Benny George is a Peruvian Quechuan Indian who decided to visit Canada 11 years ago. During the visit he was seriously injured in a motor vehicle accident as he walked across a busy roadway here in Calgary. Even though he was considered a foreigner, Benny George was eligible for medical treatment when he was brought to a nearby hospital. Although he "died" on the operating table, immediate treatment brought him back to life. The surgery that saved his life resulted in a loss of six centimeters of brain tissue on the right side of his head. That left his ability to function severely impaired.

Because he was considered a foreigner Benny George was not eligible for the rehabilitation services so necessary for the brain-injured. Instead, Benny was given a prescription and discharged from the hospital as soon as his medical condition permitted it.

Not able to speak English, without a home and without any means of support, Benny George eventually ended up living with some refugees from Guatemala. The family taught him Spanish and a little English, provided for him as best they could and gave him a spot on their floor for a bed.

'Undesirable'

Some time after his release from the hospital Benny started having problems with the government of Canada. To make a long story short, Benny wanted to become a Canadian but the government wanted to deport him. Benny failed to qualify for entry into this country because he had no money, no job, no relatives, no skills and knew no English; and finally a near-violent argument with an immigration official sealed his "undesired" status.

The government of Canada sent Benny

George back to Peru on May 31, 1990.

Repeated appeals for compassion by his friends, renunciation of his Peruvian citizenship, a variety of legal manoeuvres by the lawyers and the absence of travel documents did not influence the federal officials. In the end Benny was sent penniless back to Peru, a lawsuit for damages unresolved.

Benny George would like to return to Calgary, and his friends here would like to have him back. After the deportation Benny first spent time in a Peruvian jail, but at the time of writing he is living in Lima with a brother. However, without the life-sustaining medicine he needs Benny George will probably die soon.

The second of the three events involves the decision of a local church to purchase a piece of land for a parking lot for use roughly two hours a week. There's no legal requirement for the church to provide the additional off-street parking, nor has there ever been an occasion when a lack of parking prevented anyone from attending this church. The \$90,000 price tag and a similar amount for the cost of amortizing the debt will provide little more than some added convenience.

Afraid to be prophetic?

The third event tied the first two together. It involved the decision of a Christian Reformed pastor to omit the reading of the next to last sentence in the charge to the deacons during their installation. It's the sentence which reads, "Be prophetic critics of waste, injustice and selfishness in society and be sensitive counsellors to the victims of such evils."

It's a powerful statement of purpose. And it's part of an order to provide a vision and give leadership in serving those in need. It requires all of us to reach out beyond the self-imposed confinement of ecclesiastical structures, to worry less about parking and more about telling the Good News to people who have nothing.

My friend hasn't given up on getting Benny back to Canada. She and a small group of others are now trying to persuade the Honourable Joe Clark, Minister of External Affairs, to intervene and return Benny from Peru. So far Mr. Clark has not responded favourably to their request.

Jake Kuiken is a registered social worker who lives and works in Calgary.

Widespread decline in real estate market

... continued from page 1.

The problem of real estate sales is nationwide, Schuringa and Baarda agree, but it seems to be particularly acute in Toronto.

In the large cities it is especially hard for first-time buyers to enter the market because of high costs. Yet first-time buyers are the key to the market, says Baarda, because without new buyers there is no movement. After selling for a number of years for Re/Max, Baarda now concentrates on selling new houses.

Many agents have left real estate selling altogether, many of them people who have been selling part-time. The Re/Max office from which Baarda works has shrunk from 75-80 agents to 40 or less, which may be typical.

Schuringa points out that, as in most selling enterprises, it is 20 per cent of the sales people who sell 80 per cent of the houses.

One of the successful agents who has recently quit selling

houses in Toronto is Mark Boekelman, who left Royal LePage after 10 years because he finally got tired of the escalating pressures.

Along with the agents, the people who are hit hardest with the collapse of the real estate market are those who are forced to sell their house, often because of job transfer to another city. House prices are down by 15-20 per cent in Metro Toronto compared to two years ago, with some houses selling for 30 per cent less.

People who get their livelihood from selling get used to the ups and downs of the paycheque, though this downturn is one of the most severe of recent times. In time there will be another upswing, and Baarda thinks he sees some signs of that in early July activity.

Monsieur, whose approval rate just about equals the bank rate, was off to Texas to hobnob with the economic high and mighty. This was after getting another few frequent-flyer-points for jetting to the NATO meeting in London. NATO is trying to be born again, or rather to be re-incarnated as a pseudo support group for the once evil empire. Margaret Thatcher had a hard time with this regenerative process that sees the West cozy up to communism.

★★★
Monsieur's domestic troubles did not go unnoticed in the land of stars and stripes. He found it necessary to inform one and all that he will bounce back, and form yet another government. As a sort of warm up to the economic summit, Bush and Mulroney signed an agreement to begin negotiations on acid rain prevention. At the summit the decision was made to come to beleaguered Gorbachev's help with great big wads of money. To make sure the money does not just vanish in the Kremlin bureaucratic quicksand, it will be researched where the money should be inserted in the bankrupt proletarian paradise.

★★★
A few historical notes on economic summits: President Carter wrote in his diary about the 1980 summit that he was met by the West German chancellor Mr. Helmut Schmidt "ranting and raving about a letter I have written him he claimed that he was insulted." And President Reagan commented in his usual penetrating manner on the 1981 summit in Canada. "It was," he said years later "all Francois this and Helmut that."

★★★
Where, oh where is Jean Chretien? He is lying so low that he has become invisible. Dead in the water he is. Becalmed like a man on too much Valium. Rumour has it that many Liberals have already written the next election off.

★★★
A certain Mr. Michael Zareski who had risen to the exalted position of deputy minister in the Nova Scotia government shucked the whole political schmeat, and starting accusing premier John Buchanan of accepting kickbacks. And you know where Mr. Zareski wound up? In a psychiatric institution in Guelph, Ont., that's where!

★★★
Take a hold of yourself, breathe deeply. This announcement is worse than the news about killer bees or potato sickness. It comes straight from a big fat headline in the Financial Post: "Dividends in danger if slump deepens." Conrad Black went into deep shock, I am sure.

★★★

Premier Bourassa watches with weary wonder Quebec's declining birthrate. Already Quebec's budget allows for a \$6,000 bonus for every child after the first two. Either the bonus is not high enough or else the overwhelmingly Roman Catholic population rebels against papal authority.

★★★
The Senate committee which conducts hearings on the GST bill was in Prince Edward Island. Eating lobster and listening to the mayor of Summerside who is Canada's number one promoter of the tax bill. Summerside, P.E.I., is designated as the national GST processing centre, which would bring the community about 1,700 jobs. Besides being the number one promoter of the GST, mayor Basil Stewart might also be the only one. John Diefenbaker loved to tell that the Saskatchewan provincial Tories once held a convention in a six passenger sedan. If GST proponents held a meeting in that vehicle there would probably be a couple of empty seats left.

★★★
In my unending pursuit of keeping C.C. readers informed I perused The Patent Office Record and found that a certain Mr. David Weston had applied for a patent on a Head Immobilizer. There is something that members of the cloth might keep an eye on. A thing-a-ma-ding like that could come in handy.

★★★
The unification of Germany has all kinds of interesting side effects. West Berliners have started buying ridiculously cheap East Berlin real estate. And some East Germans all of a sudden get notices from landlords they did not even know existed. The Ostmark, which was never worth very much, is now getting value as a collector's item. The Germans are filling empty mineshafts with Ostmarks.

Unification still causes unease, though. Chancellor WunderKohl is a man with an

instinct and lust for power. He has been compared to a bulldozer, and the German bulldozer, as we all know, may veer off in unexpected directions. A fact is that his enormous figure dwarfs other leaders at the economic summit.

★★★
Something happened in a building in Korea which is euphemistically called The South-North Dialogue office. That building contains one of the few direct telephone lines to North Korea. Just recently the telephone rang for the first time in many, many months. The North was calling to announce it would receive a South Korean cabinet minister. Who knows what will happen.

There is a quiet counter revolution going on in China. Provincial leaders are slowly replaced by hard-line military men. The process is like saving pennies. It takes a long time to fill a pickle jar, but all of a sudden the jar is full. That's what has happened in China, leaving no doubt about who is in charge in Beijing.

★★★
If you are not too happy about the coming GST, imagine the exuberance of the people in Peru about President-elect Mr. Fujimori's plans to up the taxes by 300 per cent. This is something which will bring Peru again in the good graces of the International Monetary Fund. The former president Alan Garcia had stopped debt payments to the Fund. Try that once with Household Finance and see what happens.

★★★
And speaking about taxes — the tax increase plans of Read-my-Lips Bush has the U.S. Democrats dancing in the streets for joy. Happy days are here again, they sing. It is like offering ammunition to the Democrat's guns which had been firing duds.

★★★
Another president who is really taking charge is Mexico's President Carlos Salinas de Gartiri (with a name like that the man should be a poet). He

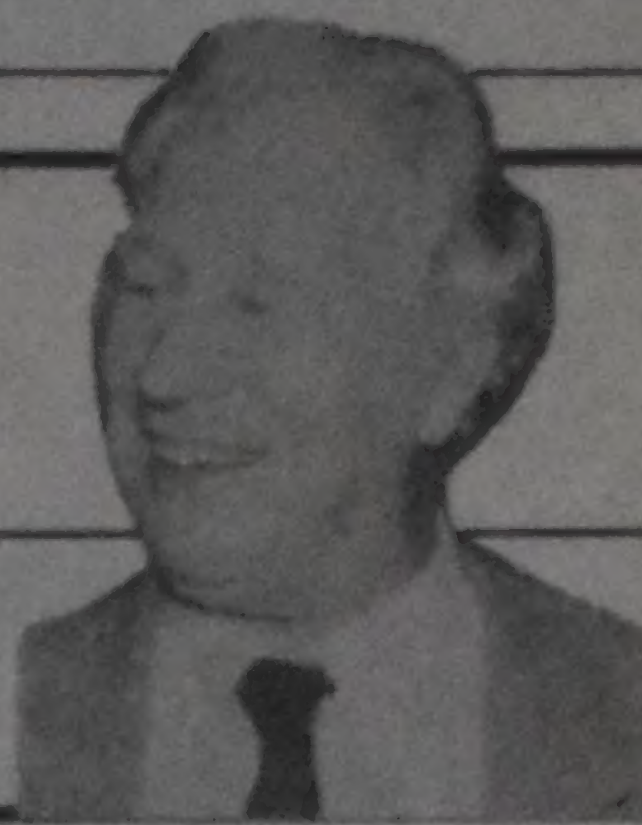
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Pressreview


Carl D. Tuyl

has startled Mexicans with the new and hitherto unknown procedure of imprisoning tax evaders. Mexico's inflation is reduced, its deficit is shrinking, and the country enjoys a three per cent economic growth. How about having Mr. Wilson follow a "how-to" course in Mexico City.

★★★
Ay yah yah, mama mia. Italy has been eliminated from the World Cup. What's this world coming to? On top of that Il Mondiale was not the \$5-million pot of gold it was expected to be. Greedy tourist exploiters overreached themselves and scared off a lot of visitors. A room in a run-

down Milan fleabag ran to \$140,- a night. I wouldn't pay that to see Mrs. Thatcher kiss the Pope.

★★★
Ogden Nash was a wise man. He wrote:
*The early bird may catch the worm
or so we've all been taught
If this is so, it follows that
the early worm gets caught.*
In that connection read also: Pro. 27:14.

Carl D. Tuyl is pastor of First Christian Reformed Church in Kingston, Ont.

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Editorial

Calvinist Contact

An independent Christian weekly that seeks to proclaim the truth, care and rule of Jesus Christ.

Calvinist Contact:

(ISSN0410-3882) is published by Calvinist Contact Publishing Limited, 261 Martindale Rd., Unit 4, St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1
Tel: (416) 682-8311 FAX: (416) 682-8313
Office hours: 8:15 a.m. - 4:15 p.m.

Editor:

Bert Witvoet

General Manager:

Stan de Jong

Associate Editor:

Marian Van Til

Assistant Editor:

Robert Vander Vennen

Regular Contributors:

Paul De Groot, Stan de Jong, Anne Hutten, Reinder J. Klein, Angela Terpstra, Nandy Heule

Accounting:

Amy Van Dokkumburg

Advertising:

Suzanna Brasz

Circulation & Mailing:

Grace Bowman

Layout & Design:

Cecilia van Wylick

Typesetting:

Kim Yungblut

Proofreading:

Willy Suk-Kleer

Editorial Advisory Board:

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Publication dates:

Calvinist Contact is published weekly on Fridays except for July 20, Aug. 3, 10, Sept. 21 and Dec. 28, by Calvinist Contact Publishing Limited, 261 Martindale Rd., Unit 4, St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1.

Canada mail:

Second class mail registration #0451. Postage paid at St. Catharines, Ontario. Postmaster: Send address changes to Calvinist Contact, 261 Martindale Rd., Unit 4, St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1.

U.S. mail:

Calvinist Contact (USPS 518-090). Second class postage paid at Lewiston, NY 14092. Send address changes to Calvinist Contact, Box 110, Lewiston, NY 14092.

Advertising:

Display advertising deadline is Wednesday at 8:30 a.m. of the preceding week. Classified advertising deadline is Thursday at 8:30 a.m. for the next week's issue.

See classified pages.

The publication of comments, opinions or advertising does not imply agreement or endorsement by either Calvinist Contact or Calvinist Contact Publishing Limited.

Printed in Canada.

Subscriptions	Canada	United States
Six months	\$18.50	\$17.00
One year	\$32.50	\$28.00
Two years	\$60.00	\$51.00
Three years	\$90.00	\$76.50
Overseas: \$120.00 airmail		\$65.00 surface mail

261 Martindale Rd., Unit 4,
St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1

Tel.: (416) 682-8311 or FAX: (416) 682-8313

Where's the seasoning of mercy?

Sometimes I wonder about the system we live in.

Take the banks, for example. They serve me very well. I have a good job and am not heavily encumbered by debt. It's easy for me to get a loan. In fact, the loan manager will try to get me to borrow more than I want or need to borrow. Yet, I know that there are people out there who need a loan much more badly than I do but they can't secure one. That makes sense from the bank's point of view, of course. Banks are not willing to take great risks; yet, they must assume some "safe" risks to make money. People like me are considered safe risks; so, we are given the red-carpet treatment when we ask for money.

Another institution that serves the "safe" risk people well are insurance companies. If you're young and your health is very good, you are a most favoured client and are urged to insure your life at very little cost. When your health declines and you get older, you may come to a point where you are practically uninsurable. The same with car insurance. The more accident prone you are the more difficult it is to get a reasonable car insurance. That, too, makes a lot of sense economically, but it doesn't always feel so good for those people who need protection as much if not more than most others.

Another way the system works well for me is in the way the police is there "to serve and protect." If I buy a large house and gain much wealth, I can count on the police to try to make sure that no-one takes that away from me. If my life is in danger, the police can be contacted and I can expect that they will exert great effort to try to save my life, sometimes at the cost of their own lives.

If I were very poor, however, I would not need the police so much for the protection of my property and possessions. If I had a criminal record and was known by the local police, I

would probably resent the police. From my point of view they are not there to protect and serve me, they always seem to hassle me. They never trust me when I walk down the street minding my own business. I begin to think of them as my enemy. I refer to them as pigs. All of this is very shocking, of course, for those nice middle-class citizens who appreciate the police so much for the fine way they keep an eye on their three-bedroom bungalow with double garage.

I suppose I am a fool for even contemplating these common sense realities that most people take for granted. Of course, the system works well for good, responsible, law-abiding citizens. Would I want it any different? Would I insure a man near death? Would I lend money to a person heavily in debt or without decent assets to cover the loan? Would I want the criminal protected from the citizen who keeps the law? Don't I want a just society that runs on the principle of rewarding those who know how to live well?

I know, I know. But with the *Merchant of Venice* character Portia I say, "The quality of mercy is not strain'd --/It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven/Upon the place beneath: it is twice blest, --/It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes/And earthly power doth then show likest God's/When mercy seasons justice." What I miss in a number of institutions is the quality of mercy.

Yet, where would any one of us be without mercy, even us law-abiding citizens? The problem with our systems is that they are too large and too impersonal to be able to be merciful. One needs to be God to be merciful on a large scale. Thank God for his loving omnipresence! In the meantime, we need to supplement large systems with small-scale agencies of mercy. What a challenge for the Church of Christ.

My seventh-day rest is coming up

For the past two years the Editorial Advisory Board has urged me to consider taking a sabbatical. Sabbaticals are common place among academics who need to refresh their minds and spirits, but they are also applied to other leaders — editors, ministers and directors of agencies. Since I will have been at Calvinist Contact for eight years this fall, my sabbatical is really two years overdue.

Sabbaticals are a bit hard to justify when at the moment of application the subject seems to be doing fairly well in terms of health and work. They seem to make more sense when a leader is losing vitality and running stuck. However, the accumulated wisdom of the ages has determined that it is best to take a seventh-year "rest" when the person in question is still whole.

Sabbaticals have two purposes — to provide some relaxation and change of pace from deadlines and work pressures, and to provide opportunities for input rather than output. The input can consist of studies, travel, conversations and reading.

It is my intention to travel with my wife through parts of Central and Eastern Europe for a month. We hope to visit Hungary and

Romania. I will probably write something about that experience, which will include a visit to Reformed centres.

As for conversations and reading, I hope to focus on the question: "Where are the young adults at in the Reformed community?" I hope to have some friends organize evenings for me with four or five young adults in various localities in order to discuss their needs, views and hopes. I will do some reading of sociological studies of North America, and of Canada in particular.

While I am gone, Marian Van Til will be steering the ship for me, assisted by Robert Vander Vennen and an additional staff member, Alison deGroot. Robert Vander Vennen will be in charge of the editorial page, writing some editorials and making use of guest editorials every other week.

I have never been on sabbatical before; so, it'll be a new experience for me. I hope I can escape feelings of guilt and of indispensability. I hope that it will truly be a time of refreshing. I rejoice in the thought that the rhythm of a seven-day creation is also extended to my job. God has been very good to me and to the paper. See you again in February!

BW

News

The world's biggest 'supermarket' opens in 1992

Larry MacDonald

BRUSSELS (Canadian Scene) — It will be so huge and has been so long in the making that it is rather difficult to mentally absorb the idea of the European Community (EC). The reality is that unless something shattering happens the EC will have a gross national product as big as that of the U.S. The 12-member EC will handle 20 per cent of world trade compared to the U.S.'s 11 per cent and Canada's four per cent.

In 1992 Europe will be "open for business." When Europe functions as a single entity, there will be a market for 320 million consumers: almost as large as the U.S. and Japan combined.

Twelve countries make up the EC: Belgium, Denmark, France, West Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom.

A senior EC official says that Canada seems to be unaware that 1992 is nearly upon us. "No one in Canada appears to be carrying the EC flag, although at one time Trudeau did."

Another official, Maeve Doran-Schiratti, from the Canada desk of the EC, said, in Canada's eyes, it had a bad name because of wine and fisheries. Both are contentious issues, she said, and officials were hopeful that they would be cleared up in the not too distant future.

One change the EC hopes to bring about is having a single currency for Europe. The United Kingdom is wary of this; it wants to keep the pound as the unit.

On a European visit sponsored by the Canadian Department of External Affairs, reporters learned the surprising fact that France grows more wheat than Canada. "When I was a kid," says Canadian Scene correspondent Larry MacDonald, "the prairies were called 'The Breadbasket of the World.'"

The EC, like so many other European organizations such as GATT and OECD, is an infrastructured organization with various political and economic units meshing with each other. "To explain the EC fully would require a volume," says MacDonald. But, basically, the EC expects to have by 1992 a single market that will be of benefit not only to European Community companies but to non-community companies. A single market will mean only one frontier. Rules, tests, standards and certification will either be equal or equivalent. This in turn will mean real economy to 320 million consumers."

Protectionism will not exist in 1992. EC officials point out all the relevant

economic data demonstrates it will be absurd for the Community to lean towards protectionism.

"But all is not sweetness and light within the EC," notes MacDonald. "While we reporters were in Europe earlier this year the *Herald Tribune* (European Edition) came out with a front page story that showed a crack in the EC's solidarity wall."

"What happened is that the Netherlands decided 'enough was enough' as far as acid rain and car emissions were concerned. It told its EC partners that it would act unilaterally to protect its environment rather than wait for passage of the long-disputed EC guidelines on auto emissions."

The Dutch approved legislation that would give tax breaks (\$840 or 17,000 guilders) for new cars that meet strict U.S. anti-pollution standards. Such cars would be equipped with catalytic converters.

Hans Glatz, secretary-general of the Brussels-based Liaison Committee of European Car Manufacturers said, "This is an impossible state of affairs when you consider that the EC is trying to create a single market by 1992."

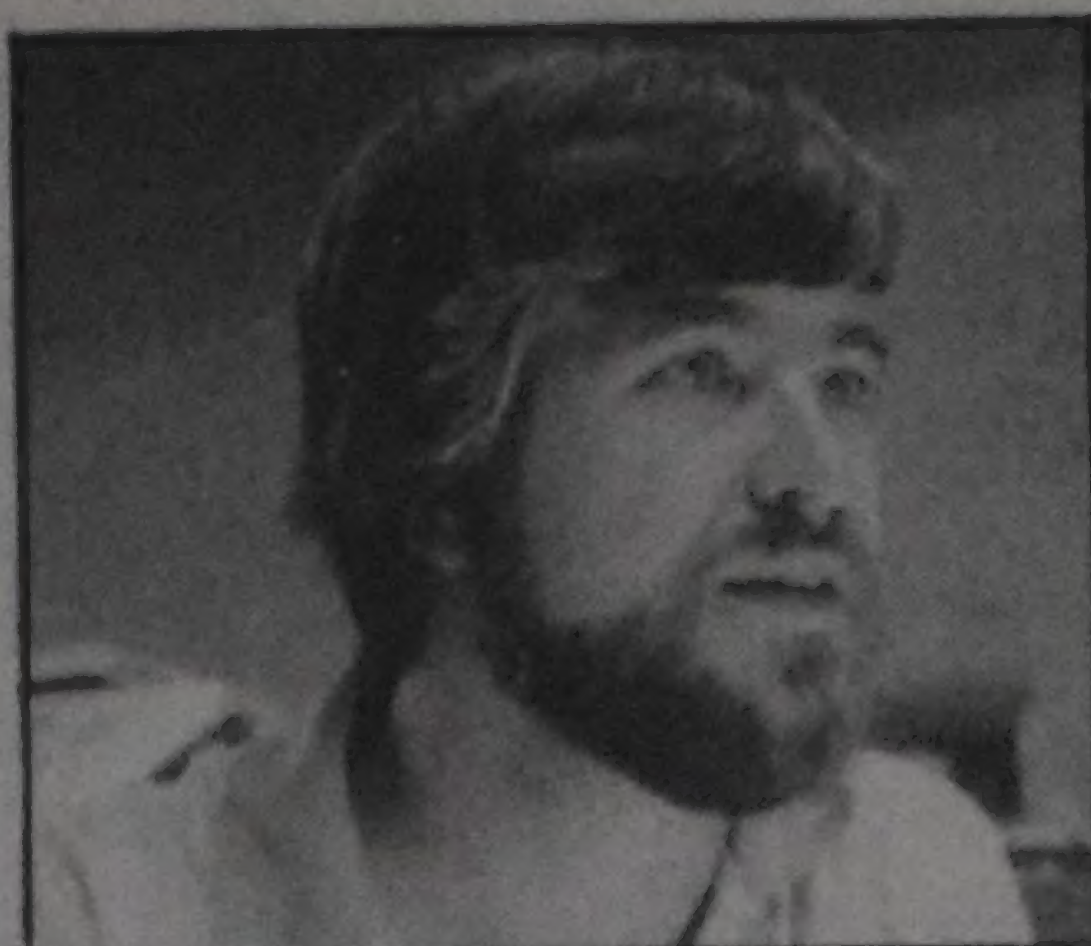
Meanwhile the tax incentive scheme has aroused furious opposition by some European car makers who see the move as a way of shutting them out of the Dutch market.

Romanian orphans imprisoned under Ceausescu; World Vision initiates assistance program

BUCHAREST, Romania (EP) — In the wake of political upheaval surrounding the overthrow of Romanian dictator Nicolai Ceausescu, Western humanitarian assistance agencies are scrambling to meet the vast needs of Romanians who for decades have been deprived of such things as an adequate food supply, housing and public sanitation services.

Among these Romanian victims, it has been discovered, are thousands of orphans who were "literally imprisoned," according to Wendy Christian, a spokesperson for World Vision. "We now estimate that some 40,000 children have been abandoned to orphanages and other institutions as a result of unwanted pregnancies," she said. "Birth control was illegal because Ceausescu wanted more workers for the state."

JUST A MOMENT/HERMAN PRAAMSMA



"Teach me to feel another's woe,
to hide the fault I see;
That mercy I to others show,
that mercy show to me."
(Alexander Pope, 1688-1744, *The Universal Prayer*)

"Grace, mercy and peace be richly multiplied unto you" What a beautiful, moving greeting that we may hear every Sunday when God's people get together for worship. What human life doesn't long for grace, for mercy and for peace? And then to hear that it's ours, yours! And not in stingy measure, but multiplied richly!

I met some Roman Catholic people last year who remarked on it that we Protestants, especially us Reformed folk, always speak of "grace," much more than does the Catholic tradition. And they wondered what we really meant by that and why we stress that one word so much. I tried to share with them what grace meant to me and why it was a motivator toward social involvement and social justice, a point about which they were really worried. They were under the impression that grace meant letting someone else do it all for you, being passive. But the whole exchange got me thinking.

What *does* grace mean in our faith community, the broader Reformed community? And I'm not after a theological definition or a catechism answer, but how grace actually operates in the practice of our lives. What do we do with this generous gift that sets us free?

Why doubt?

We still all too often don't really believe that grace is ours and it's free. It's purportedly the heart of our faith, but the answer to the question, "Do you believe that you are saved?" still scores very high in the category, "I sure hope so!" And that is very curious. It describes a great uncertainty which can cripple us at the very core of our being. For if I'm not sure about God's grace, then I will start looking for *other* ways to reassure myself, to keep myself going. And almost invariably what we find after our search turns out to be a form of legalism, of *doing* something rather than *being* in the grace that is there free of charge.

The result of all that can be that we begin to look at others askance, not seeing in them the light of God's grace which must carry their lives as well as ours; not seeing fellow travellers, struggling, imperfect as we are, and rejoicing in encouraging them with mercy and peace; but rather judging them for not walking along our path, following our rules and being severely suspicious of them if they dare speak of God's mercy, peace and grace!

What an upside-down world that becomes! From Gospel back to Law, because we find it easier to accept a doorprize than to accept God's love. When our mother says "I love you," we reply "I know, Mom"; but when our Father in heaven says, "I love you," we shuffle our feet and mutter, "I sure hope so"

God's grace is a wonderful thing. It is meant to stimulate us to thankfulness and free us up for joyful and obedient living in a new, accepting community that knows where its hope and peace are found. The Christian knows which side his or her bread is buttered on, and the butter is grace.

Why eat dry bread, the old manna!, when you are offered the Living Bread?

Herman Praamsma is an intern at a correctional institute in Brampton, and is considering a call as pastor to Immanuel Christian Reformed Church, Brampton, Ont.

Children were abandoned for a variety of reasons: parents were unable to feed them; they were taken from dissident parents and placed in the care of the state; their parents were in prison; or because of mental or physical handicap.

Romanian orphanages are little more than prisons, according to Christian. The institutions had no programs to provide stimulation, emotional nurturing play, or early education for these children.

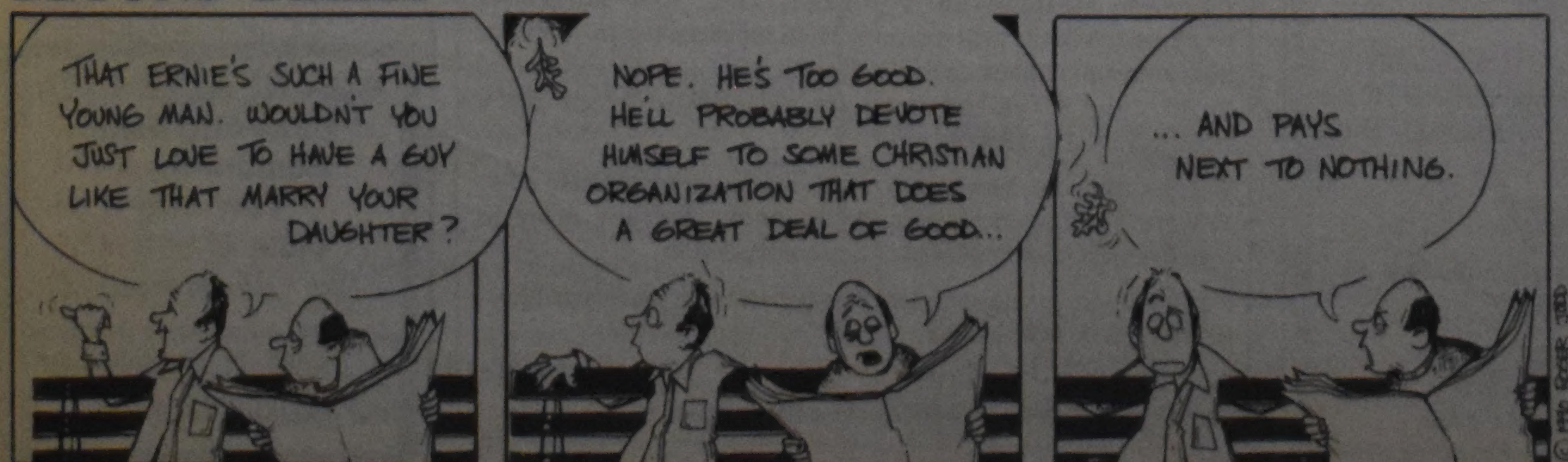
World Vision is currently creating "a program to train Romanian staff to

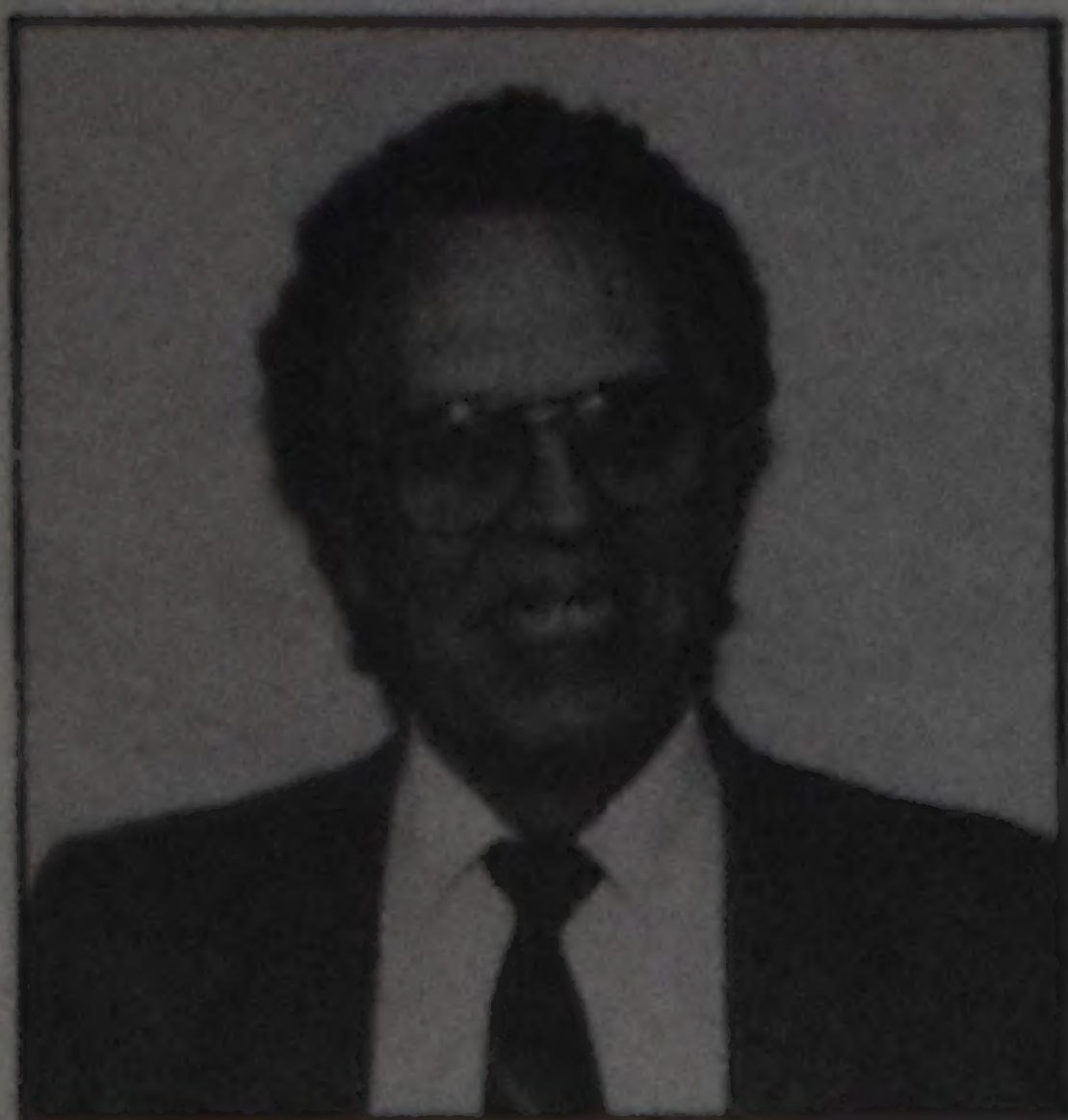
rehabilitate and literally save hundreds of these children," Christian said. "We are enlisting the co-operation and services of pediatricians and psychologists in this country, as well as medical school departments of pediatrics."

World Vision recently appointed a director for the program, Dr. Barbara Bascom, a pediatrician with 20 years of experience in child development. After a recent four-week tour of Romanian orphanages, she reported that "some of these children will die. Some will develop severe psychiatric withdrawal. Most will be delayed in their development; and none will have the opportunity to fulfil their God-given potential." Bascom plans to return to Romania in mid-July.

"We are working to establish links between the orphan institutions and nearby Romanian churches, and to train volunteer Christian care-givers to provide the continual love and care needed to rescue some of these children," Christian concluded.

BEYOND BELIEF





In and around the workplace

Ed Vanderkloet

Experiments in co-determination

After seven articles on "Industrial Democracy" my readers may be excused for stifling a yawn. But the subject is exceedingly complex and requires much more even than what I've scribbled thus far. I feel a bit like the 17th century priest in Brazil who sent a report to the king of Portugal which ended with: "I owe you an apology, Majesty, for writing such a long letter, but I did not have the time to write a short one."

The various laws on co-

determination in Western Europe (except in Britain) have been in effect now for some 35 years. Most of them require that unions and workers be represented on the boards of directors of large companies and thus have a voice in the (major) decisions made at that level. The system has not been an unqualified success but there is consensus that its benefits have been substantial.

Virtually all major concerns (e.g., Philips, Unilever, KLM, Hoechst, Siemens, Volvo,

SKF, Royal Shell) have highly capable and trained union representatives on their boards of directors.

More important, however, has been the institution of plant councils from which day-to-day decisions are made jointly by management and workers. After all, on that (lower) level matters are discussed that can be understood even by the floorsweeper and the clerk-typist. It makes no sense to draw ordinary workers into meetings where high-level decisions concerning the corporation's investment policies, for example, are made. Those are mostly (though not always) matters that require special expertise.

But shop-floor issues come close to the heart of the employees, particularly when it concerns hiring, firing, retiring and layoff policies, introduction of new technologies, initiation of new production methods, teamwork systems, and so on. Here too, the results have been mixed; it takes time to create a spirit of co-operation and the spreading of responsibility.

Responsibility a 'heart problem'

Not surprisingly, plant councils have at times diminished the work and importance of trade unions and this has caused friction on the shop floor. Workers often felt unrepresented when it came to personal problems and

grievances. Nevertheless, the fruits of plant councils' work are denied by few. When workers are consulted and asked to co-decide on things that directly affect their work, their sense of belonging to the company is greatly enhanced. But the problem remains that, for a variety of reasons, many workers prefer *not* to participate. Neither the law, nor the unions, nor the companies can force people to be responsible. Responsibility is a "heart problem" and not a structural one.

It is tragic that North American unions and corporations have done so little in this area. The reigning philosophy on this side of the Atlantic is still that management decides and employees follow orders. (In a final column I will deal with some cases of successful labour-management co-operation in Canada and the United States.)

'Do as I say'

I could cite many examples of the debilitating effect this do-as-I-say attitude has on employees, but let me give you just one. A number of years ago I represented, on behalf of CLAC, some 20 employees of a charitable organization involved in working with the handicapped. The board of directors consisted of business people, most of whom were retired. Staff members were all well-educated and skilled

counsellors, therapists and secretaries.

One morning the staff found a memo on the bulletin board announcing that henceforth no one would be allowed to take their coffee from the lunch room to their desk since a spill might ruin the newly installed carpet. Coffee and other drinks had to be consumed in the lunch room only. The memo also imposed a rather rigid dress code on all employees. The order had never been discussed with anyone and came out of the blue, so to speak. It caused deep resentment and gave the employees the impression that they were school children. It was also silly since no one had ever spilled coffee on the old carpet, and nobody had ever worn unacceptable attire to the office.

When I discussed the matter at a subsequent board meeting, the directors stuck to their decision. They had ruled and were not about to rescind the order. My argument that such rather trivial matters could have been discussed and that the employees could gladly have co-decided on these rules fell on deaf ears. Who did these staff members think they were to question the authority of the board?

The example is only one (and a small one at that) from hundreds I could cite. It is less important for the issue involved than for the authoritarian spirit it conveys, but it certainly strengthened my conviction that employees should be accorded a say in matters directly affecting their own work — for their own benefit, but also for the well-being of the entire organization.

Ed Vanderkloet does research for the Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC), headquartered in Mississauga, Ont.

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Only NINE issues will be published during July, August and September:

July 6, 13, 27, Aug. 17, 24, 31 and Sept. 7, 14, 28.

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Artist-teacher combines love for acting and love for Christ

Nandy Heule

STRATFORD, Ont. — Simon du Toit is looking for opportunities to integrate his two passions: his new Christian faith and acting.

It's not long ago that du Toit, 31, committed his life to Christ and Christian living.

And it's not long ago that he got an offer from the Stratford Festival (theatre)

and then Redeemer College to put his acting, directing and teaching skills to work in very special ways.

After working as assistant director on Stratford's production of Shakespeare's *Merry Wives of Windsor*, du Toit was invited to perform a workshop on British priest and poet John Donne.

The September 21 Donne

reading will be part of the Stratford Festival Fringe and likely be the first ever Canadian public reading of Donne's work, said du Toit.

"I have a great admiration for Donne," says du Toit. "He is the finest writer of love poetry in the English language." Du Toit's performance is an attempt to cover Donne's career from 1519-1620.

The poems were written to be spoken, says du Toit, adding that presenting the poems makes the emotional content of the words come to life. His presentation will include poems such as "Aire and Angels," "The Flea," and "Good Friday 1613."

Poet's background

Du Toit presented a similar reading of Donne's work during a four-evening arts series at Grace Christian Reformed Church in Scarborough, Ont., last spring.

Part of du Toit's reading is giving the audience some background information on Donne. He'll tell them that John Donne was a brilliant scholar raised in a Roman Catholic merchant family and that he never graduated from the University of Oxford because he refused to pledge allegiance to the Church of England and the Queen, a graduation requirement.

After roaming through romantic love, theological debate, non-fiction and poetry writing, Donne's theological writing became so esteemed that the same Church of England (Anglican) asked him to become a priest.

He accepted the call and

eventually reached one of the most powerful pulpits in the church as dean of St. Paul's Cathedral in London.

Says du Toit about the Stratford performance, "It's another chance to do work for a broader cross-section of the public," adding that he's not surprised the Stratford Festival would open its stage to Donne's work.

Stratford's artistic director David William is a Christian interested in serious material and welcomes work with a spiritual theme, said du Toit.

Du Toit says that as a Christian he feels very comfortable and welcome at Stratford.

"I will be given a great deal of support by the acting company ...; they will be with me (when reading Donne)."

Du Toit committed his life to Christ about three years ago after meeting Esther Van Eek, then a member of Grace CRC in Scarborough.

Since then the couple got married and now lives in Hamilton where they attend Fellowship CRC.

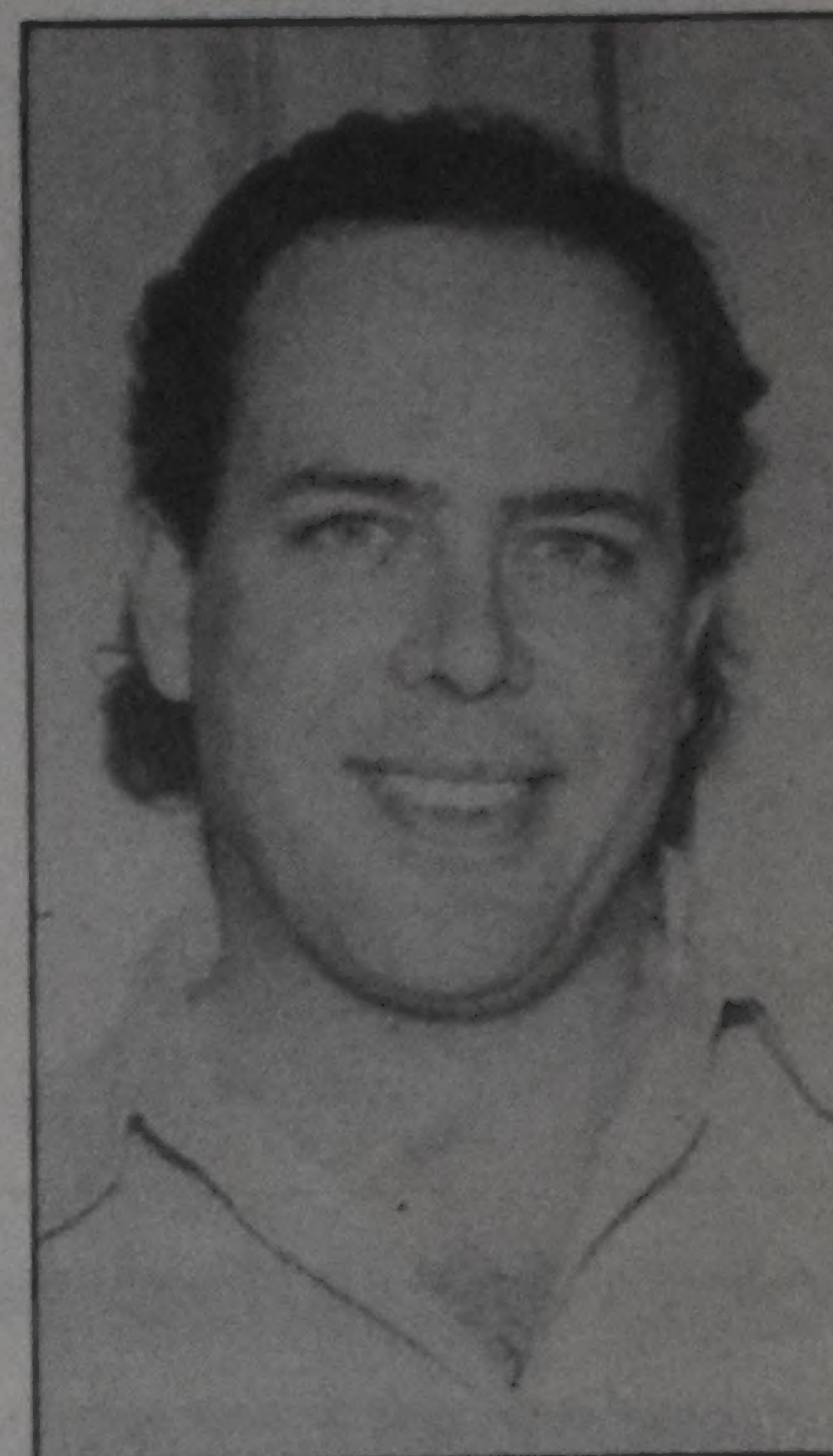
When 10 years old, du Toit moved from London, England, to Canada. But he doesn't have a British accent. He says he couldn't afford to have one in Canadian grade schools where he met up with some less than friendly bullies who assumed he must be an English "snob."

He has been acting for about 11 years and now regularly uses different accents in his acting roles.

"I act because I love the work. I really love the work," asserts du Toit. "To me it's a significant thing to do Theatre is ultimately about sharing experiences between actor and audience."

Du Toit earned a Master of Fine Arts degree in theatre performance at York University in Toronto where he also worked as a part-time faculty member.

Starting this fall, he will be



putting those teaching skills to work at Redeemer College where he will be offering a course in oral and ensemble interpretation.

"One reason why I'm happy about the job at Redeemer is that it gives opportunity to combine my work and faith, to confront particular aspects of my work which are affected by faith."

Church News can be found on page 19.

Cinema summaries

Marian Van Til



Days of Thunder

Rated PG

Stars Tom Cruise, Robert Duvall, Randy Quaid, Nicole Kidman, Cary Elwes
Directed by Tony Scott

If you're a stock care enthusiast or just like to see cars rip around a race track at fantastic speeds, you'll like this movie; likewise if you appreciate Tom Cruise. And if (as I am) you're more interested in the superb acting skills of Robert Duvall than the physical attributes of either Tom Cruise or Nicole Kidman, it may not be an *entirely* wasted exercise. But Duvall and Randy Quaid excepted, the acting is thin and the film is generally long on action, short on plot.

Despite that, many viewers are finding it compelling (it's making a lot of money for Paramount Pictures). It could be the cars — the speed and danger are addicting for some, heightened by the inside view of this very treacherous sport. But more likely it's the love story that grabs viewers. Not the (very improbable) one between rookie driver Cole Trickle (Cruise) and neurologist Clare Luwicki (Nicole Kidman), but the one between all these grown-up boys and their cars — and for each other (though they can't express it).

Cruise's character, not surprisingly, injects a slight margin of sensitivity into this tough-man's world; Duvall's does too, in a different way. Duvall plays Harry, an older man — a car builder, not a driver — who has retired from the sport and gone back to farming (home base is North Carolina). But Harry was the best there was at putting a stock car together, and he's not bad in the wisdom department either. So, of course, when an agent is looking for a car for his maverick driver, he comes to Harry. And Harry takes the bait, against his better judgment.

In the process of criss-crossing the continent from one raceway to another, and culminating in the famous Daytona 500, Cole Trickle (who thinks up these names?) learns to face his fear: of getting maimed or dying on the track, of having nothing in life beyond racing. He also confronts what his doctor-girlfriend calls his "infantile" psyche, and learns to be less selfish.

So those battles overcome, he wins Daytona, not just for himself but for his out-of-commission, brain-injured friend/fellow driver; he gets the girl (she has left him but returns when he needs her most), and presumably lives a happy and profitable life thence forward. Fade out.

Draw your own conclusions.



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Church

Marian Van Til, page editor

Nigerian tension high

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (REC) — Following a coup attempt in Nigeria on April 14, tension between Muslims and Christians in Nigeria has been very high. The coup attempt arose in the southern area of Nigeria, with Christians and other non-Muslims taking part. The basic cause for the coup was resentment against the increasing Islamicization of the country, according to Rev. Iyortyom Achineku, General Secretary of the Church of Christ in the Sudan among the

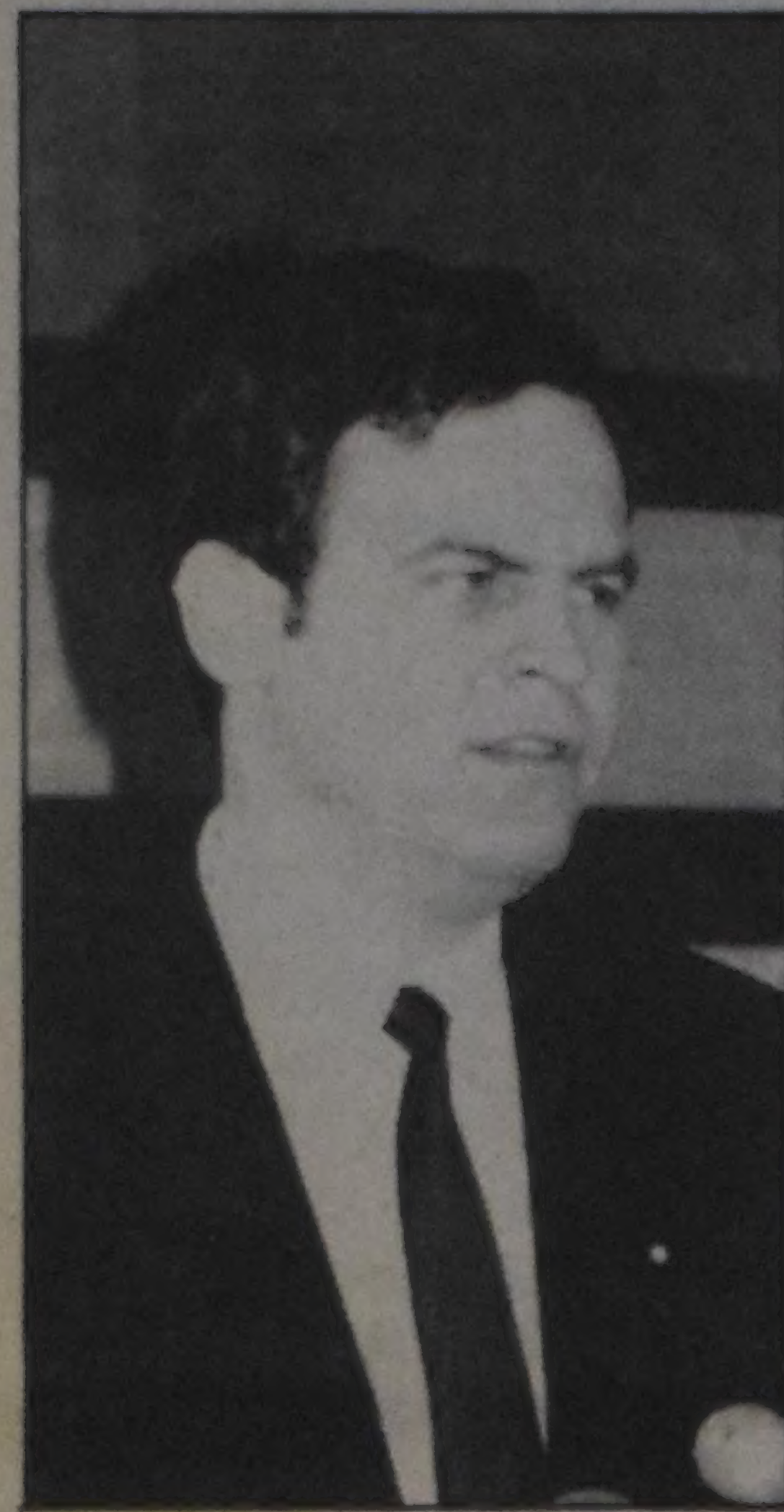
Tiv (NKST). Two recent incidents illustrate the tension, according to Achineku. In late May, there was a riot in Gongola State, in which many Muslims were killed. In early June, nine churches were destroyed by the government in Katsine. The chief of the local government had declared that he would not walk on a street where a Christian church was still standing. Achineku said the situation was explosive. There are two ecumenical

organizations in Nigeria that have addressed the problem. The Fellowship of Christian Churches (TEKAN) has written four letters to the President of Nigeria, but has received only acknowledgements that the letters were received. The government gave no reply to the substance of the letters. The Christian Association of Nigeria, a broader and more inclusive body, has published a pamphlet pointing up the increasing Islamicization of the

country. It noted, for example, that all the cabinet members in the new cabinet are Muslims. The government has recently moved the capital of Nigeria from Lagos to Abuja. It is making efforts to keep a visible Christian presence out of the area. The NKST is trying to construct a Christian Center there, which would include a church, a youth centre, a guesthouse, and a parsonage. Three times approval for construction has been given, and three times it has been

withdrawn again. The NKST members in Abuja are gathering under bridges for worship, while the bureaucratic obstruction continues. Achineku pointed out that economic difficulties make the situation worse. He noted a recent increase in the death rate, some of it related to economic decline.

Tokes installed as bishop



Rev. Laszlo Tokes.

Photo: Bert Witvoet

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (REC) — In May Rev. Laszlo Tokes was installed as the new Bishop of Oradea in the Reformed Church of Romania. Just one-half year ago, his life was nearly lost during the resistance to and uprising against the former regime.

The installation ceremony had a Hungarian stamp. The

Hungarian-speaking bishop of Slovakia presided, while Hungarian bishops from Yugoslavia and the Ukraine also participated. The Bishop of Debrecen, Hungary, led in prayer.

Tokes stressed the need for rebuilding the church in his inaugural sermon. After many years of opposition, it is remarkable that the church

survived at all. Tokes noted that much was destroyed, and he hoped that spiritual renewal would also come during the rebuilding of the church.

Tokes called for greater emphasis on the unity of the church, first in Romania, then among Hungarian groups, and then with our Calvinist churches. He asked for more democracy in the

RCR, calling for a more active synod and presbytery structure. He noted that the first step was to limit the power of bishops, who are now chosen for a four-year term instead of for life. He noted that the church is a service organization, and called for the restoration of its diaconal work.

U.S. Supreme Court rules on three 'life' issues

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP) — Three decisions favouring the right-to-life political agenda were issued by the U.S. Supreme Court at the end of last month. The court upheld parental notification abortion restrictions in Minnesota and Ohio, and ruled that a state's interest in protecting life takes precedence over family members who want to euthanize terminally ill relatives.

The parental notification law was in place in Minnesota during the early 1980s; during that time teen pregnancies dropped by 27 per cent in Minnesota, according to Waldorf. But the law had been stayed by a judge's order pending the outcome of the judicial challenge.

Jackie Schwiets, executive director of Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life (MCCL),

the state's largest pro-life group, agreed that parental notification is a step in the right direction. "We think parents are more qualified to advise their daughters, because they have raised them, they love them, and they know them," she said. "They certainly are more qualified than abortionists who are strangers and have an economic and ideological stake in the abortion."

Jordan Lorence, litigation director for Concerned Women for America (CWA), which filed a friend-of-the-court brief in the Ohio notification case, predicted that other states would follow the lead of Minnesota and Ohio. "The parental notification cases are a clear victory for the pro-lifers," he said. "There will be pro-lifers in other states around the union

who will be pushing for parental notification. The Supreme Court has sent a green light for parental notification laws."

In another life-issues case, the Supreme Court held that a Missouri woman who is severely disabled because of brain damage sustained in a 1983 car accident may not be starved to death. The family of Nancy Cruzan, 32, who is being fed through a tube in her stomach to make long-term care easier, had sought permission to remove her feeding tube, which would have led to death by starvation and dehydration. The family argued that providing food and water constituted "medical care," and that they had a right to discontinue medical care for Cruzan.

Marker added, "The battle to protect the medically vulnerable is not yet over. Those who demand euthanasia — capital punishment for the sick, old, or disabled — will continue to push their elitist agenda through legislation, the courts, and disregard for the law. The IAETF will continue to vehemently oppose this blatant discrimination by working to protect the medically vulnerable and to

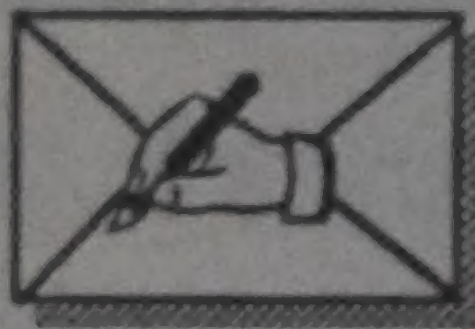
ensure appropriate care and support for them and their families."

Though the Cruzan case affected the agenda of the right-to-die movement, it did not touch the living will issue, in which a person makes a self-determination regarding the medical care they wish to receive. Rather, it dealt with surrogate decision-making, where another person decides what medical care is appropriate for a comatose or otherwise incompetent person.

The lack of clear written instructions by Nancy Cruzan specifying her desires relating to continued feeding and hydration was a pivotal issue in the case. While the victory does not answer all of the questions surround euthanasia, and indeed seems to invite further cases in the issue, right-to-life groups are relieved that the Court passed on an opportunity to issue a sweeping pro-death ruling.

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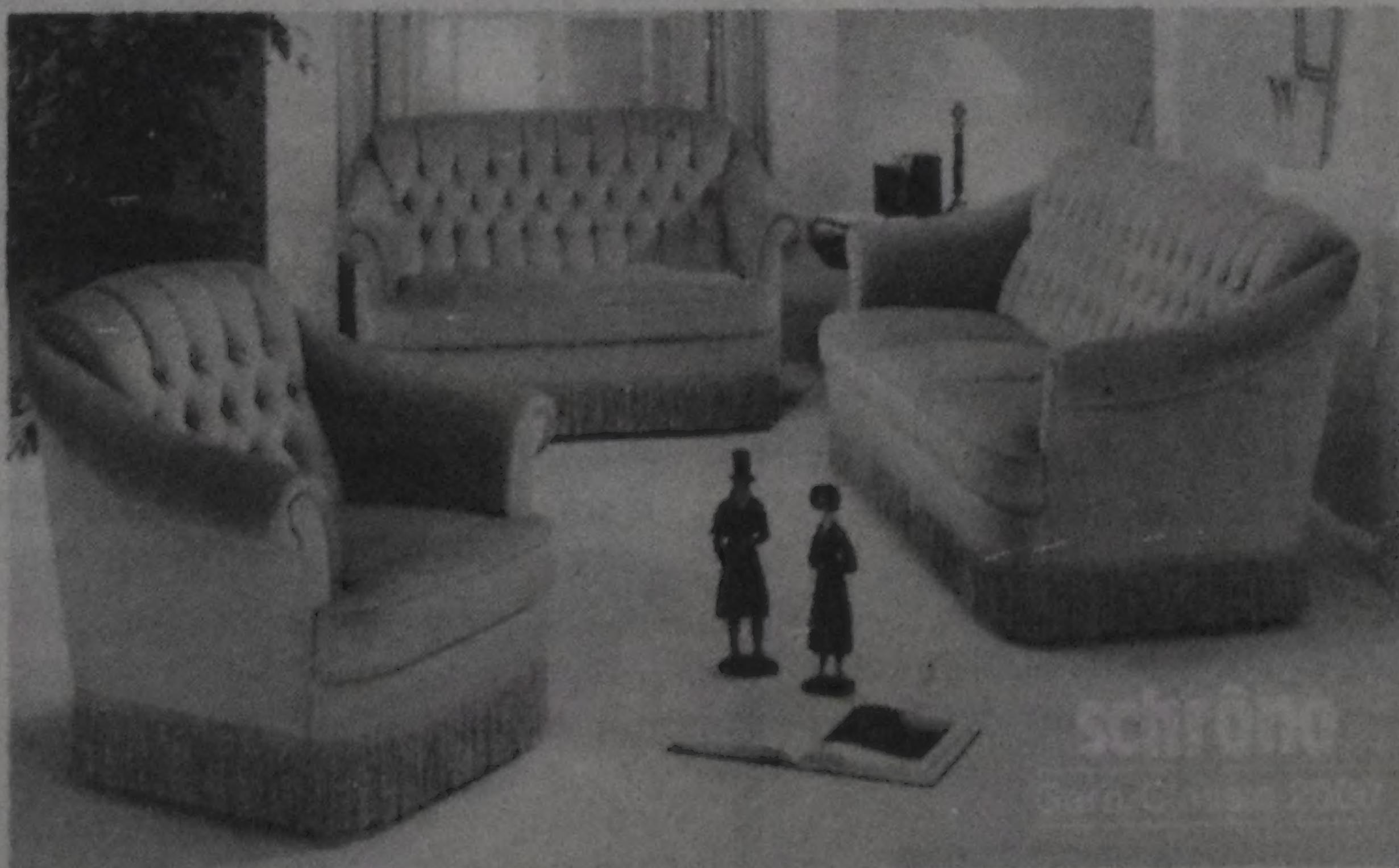
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Catholic politicians risk excommunication over pro-abortion views, says O'Connor

NEW YORK, N.Y. (EP) — New York's John Cardinal O'Connor warned Roman Catholic politicians June 14 that they risk excommunication from the Catholic church if they persist in supporting legalized abortion.

"For the common good, such Catholics must be warned that they are at risk of excommunication," said O'Connor. Though he didn't name any specific politicians, he said excommunication was being risked by Catholics who "are perceived not only as treating church teaching on abortion with contempt, but helping to multiply abortions by advocating legislation supporting abortion or by making public funds available for abortion."

The strongly-worded statement appeared in the weekly newspaper of the Archdiocese of New York. Ex-

communication is the most powerful sanction of the church, and is rarely imposed. It cuts Catholics off from the sacraments of baptism, communion, confirmation, ordination to the priesthood, last rites, and matrimony.

Since he became Archbishop of New York six years ago, O'Connor has been at odds with Governor Mario Cuomo over the abortion issue. Cuomo, a Catholic, claims to personally oppose abortion, but has consistently supported abortion legislation and public funding of abortion.

At an impromptu news conference, Cuomo called O'Connor's threat upsetting. "I am not suggesting to you that we are religious and good," he said. "I'm suggesting that we are vulnerable, that we are frail, and for that reason we climb to our Roman Catholicism as a source of strength, and when

someone suggests that they might try to divide that connection, it is profoundly disconcerting, but it is not going to change anything."

In his article, O'Connor questioned the stance many Catholic politicians take of being "personally opposed" to abortion while actively supporting it in their public life. He wrote, "The 'personally opposed' phrase says, in effect: 'In public life I will act indistinguishable from someone who sees abortion as a positive social good, but please know that I will do so with personal regret.' This regret is hardly effective, since it serves the agenda of those who actively favour abortion."

Other churches have begun taking a stronger stand against politicians who stray from church policy on abortion. A state legislator in New Hampshire who describes herself as a conservative

Republican and born-again Christian was refused membership in an American Baptist congregation in New Hampshire early this year because of her pro-abortion stand. Rep. Stephanie Micklon was denied membership in the First Baptist Church of Salem, in which she grew up and was baptized, because she sponsored a bill to allow abortion-on-demand through the 26th week of pregnancy.

A hand-delivered letter from the church's pastor and

deacons said they did not question Micklon's salvation, but felt her public position on abortion "brings disgrace on Jesus' name and on what First Baptist Church stands for." Micklon said she had told her children "not to judge the Lord by the people who work for him. They're just the hired help." Church leaders said calls on their decision to deny membership to Micklon were running more than 30-1 in favour of the church.

TIV Bible has 25th anniversary, but without Bibles

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (REC) — In November of 1989, the Church of Christ in the Sudan among the Tiv (NKST) in Nigeria celebrated the 25th anniversary of the translation of the Bible into the Tiv language. Unfortunately, the celebration was rather somber because no copies of the Tiv Bible are currently available for new Christians. Rev. Iyortyom Achineku, the

general secretary of the NKST, reported there is currently a need for about 100,000 Bibles in his church and other Tiv-speaking groups.

The shortage is all the more pressing in view of rapid church growth in Nigeria recently. Last year, Achineku reported, the NKST baptized 11,325 adults as new members, but had no Bibles to give them. The NKST had about 50,000

baptized members in 1988, but reported over 380,000 others attending the worship services.

The NKST has ordered a printing of 25,000 Bibles, but they are printed in England. Now the difficulties of raising money and converting it to foreign currency have made it impossible to pay for this order. Its value is about U.S. \$125,000.

Cambodia opens doors to missionaries

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia (EP) — Cambodia, known as the land of the "killing fields," has abruptly ended years of hostility toward the gospel and flung its doors open to Christians with an official welcome, according to the Christian and Missionary Alliance (C&MA).

The seven members of a delegation from the missions-oriented denomination were given royal treatment from Cambodian officials when they visited this spring for two weeks. In discussions with national leader, the C&MA delegation, representing the denomination's Cambodian Christian Services arm (CCS), expressed a desire to provide financial aid and supplies for the Cambodian people.

The nation, which still shows wounds from its civil war and scars from the genocidal campaign by the Marxist Khmer Rouge which cost over one million lives, is in great need of outside assistance. The delegation made it clear that it was their intent to aid the Christian community and encourage evangelistic witness throughout the country.

The group was "welcomed and appreciated by all," said the Rev. Joseph S. Kong, chairperson of the CCS provisional executive committee. "The door has been opened wide for all Christian organizations to help reconstruct the country." Kong said he believes the drastic and sudden reversal of official opposition to all religions is an adjustment to political realities. "The regime in Phnom Penh wants to be recognized by as many Western countries as possible. The government needs everything to reconstruct the nation."

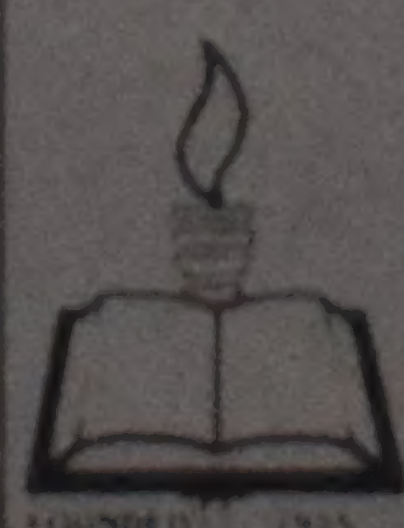
The visit was hastily arranged after the Vietnamese-backed Phnom Penh regime announced in January that religious groups would be allowed to function in the country. The decree was formally signed into law in April.

Kong said that the delegation was allowed to hold several evangelistic rallies and church services. The government even made available its 700-seat Chenia Theater in the capital city. The theater was filled to capacity when Kong and his

group conducted the first public evangelical meeting since the country came under Communism in 1975.

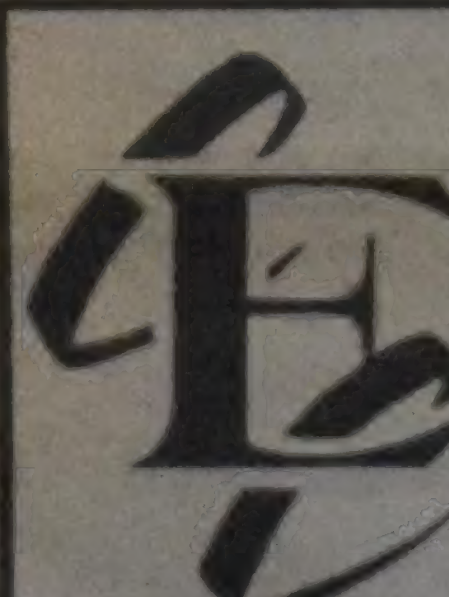
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Number four twenty-seven

Annita Maat

The basement of the church was grey and cavernous. Voices echoed as sandwiches were unwrapped. In the kitchen water was boiling in a crumpled aluminum kettle.

"Make sure you don't use Youth Talks' coffee," Tom directed. "They've been complaining that their supply is vanishing too quickly."

Corrinne and I tittered nervously. As newcomers, unsure of group procedure, we just sat silently. Our hands were folded demurely, our legs were crossed, and our skirts were primly tucked under nyloned thighs. Now and then we'd smile, at no one in particular. Corrinne was better at this than I was; she had wonderfully straight teeth and a smile that stretched from ear to ear when she really let go. At its most dazzling, her smile could cover one-third of her face. I thought this was amazing.

She and I had become best friends that Grade 9 year. A bit on the chubby side, Corrinne was just beginning a life-long battle with her weight. Short-cropped blonde hair framed a round face blessed with friendly blue eyes. Secretly, I envied her ample configurations and her tiara of teeth. My own teeth were large and crooked. I fancied them such a social liability that I'd even spent time in front of the bathroom mirror practising how to laugh with my upper lip covering them. Unfortunately, the end result was not pleasant; it resembled a painful grimace more than a sophisticated smile.

Corrinne had one other unique talent. On occasion, given the right audience (such

as half the class, when the teacher wasn't looking), she would consent to an impromptu performance. The only prerequisite was an availability of sufficient moisture. Given the correct conditions, Corrinne was able to pinch together her rather widely-flared nostrils, suck in deeply through her nose and create a whole new face for herself. As if glued together, her nostrils formed a high ridge which pulled her cheekbones taut, enlarged her eyes, and remained fixed like that until she blew out vigorously. It was a marvellous trick but, no matter how I tried, I could never duplicate it. Even now, a mother of five, I occasionally give my nose a wistful pinch and suck in sharply, but all I ever get are cleared nasal passages.

Of course, at the stacking table in the church basement, neither of us tried any of these juvenile tricks. There, we sat stiffly, straining at once to be unobtrusive and sincere.

The others around the table were both familiar and frightening to us. For years we had watched each of them float into a family pew in the building's upper level, more reverently referred to as "the sanctuary." These were the girls who had been wearing nylons for years, who had long ago perfected an ability to walk as if they had been created with two-inch spikes emerging from their heels; who wore black leather gloves to church rather than mitts; and who talked of going with boys on dates as if it were a ho-hum thing to do. These were the boys whose voices had passed the sudden-squeak-clear-your-throat-and-act-nonchalant-stage; the ones

whose shoulders actually filled out the suit jackets somewhat; whose chins and cheeks were finally past the downy-gosling look of pre-shave maleness.

We saw them all, twice each Sunday, and watching them afar we had come to know them as one knows all the comforting details of a place where one feels blanketed and safe. But we had always seen them from a distance; now, face to face with their stubble and lip gloss, with the curl of their eyelashes exploding into our senses, we felt uncomfortable and strange.

"Next time, we'd like you girls to make some sandwiches, too," Tom was saying.

"Really, it's too bad you haven't reached your sixteenth birthdays yet. This is not a place for kids to fool around and act silly," he said sternly, and we both looked as adult as we possibly could.

"No, no, we agree. We can't stand silliness," we said earnestly. Our hearts thumped anxiously. Would we suffer the humiliation of being excluded because we were a few weeks too young? Or would they make an exception in our case and bend the rules? To increase the odds in our favour, we joined the others in an after-supper smoke. Corrinne smoked menthol cigarettes and did not inhale. I smoked Export A, pilfered from under my dad's chair, and did inhale, though not as expertly as he. Both of us carefully crooked the little finger of our smoking hand as daintily as possible.

It must have helped, because in no time at all the dishes were washed, the last light switch was flicked, the church was locked into silent darkness and we were packed, sardine-like,

into a fleet of cars travelling to Eastridge Nursing Home. Pressed between Tom, who was driving, and Earnest, I tried desperately to think of something, anything, to say. A strong odour of Old Sail aftershave mixed with the stale cigarette smell of the overflowing ashtray. Earnest said something to Tom about the car up ahead. The skin of his lips was stretched tight and shiny over the flesh within, giving them a bulbous look. I tried not to imagine the sensation of pressing against them in a kiss, but it was difficult. Not that I felt amorously inclined; it was simply a matter of learning to restrain the abstract curiosity and vivid imagination which so often overcame me.

★★★
Earnest was kind. His friendly eyes were magnified several times by the thick glasses he wore and he had an unfortunate habit of sharply sucking air between his teeth, almost as if he were about to drool but had caught it just in time. Nevertheless, Earnest was kind. He addressed me by name and asked my opinion on some technical matter. Earnest was very bright. He knew all there was to know about technical matters. I, too, was very bright. I excelled in English and history. About technical matters, I knew nothing.

For a moment or two I was in a quandary; sweat trickled down from under my armpits the way it always does when I feel nervous and exposed. Should I change the subject, pretend deafness, or admit that I knew nothing about technical matters? I decided to remain true to the inward thunder of

the Ninth Commandment and, in so doing, I learned the secret of talking to Christian Reformed boys.

"I don't know much about that," I stammered breathlessly, "can you explain it to me?" Both boys fell all over themselves explaining the matter. So I experimented. The dumber the question, the more voluminous the explanation. Actually, the subject matter was incredibly boring but they, themselves, were immensely interesting to me, as was the age-old trick I'd inadvertently stumbled upon.

Soon we were there. Earnest helped me from the car and Tom held the door of the nursing home open. Inside, the warmth of a well-lit foyer welcomed us. A piano stood to one side. Antique lamps glowed soft circles onto its mahogany surfaces. An old lady was playing "Rock of Ages" with quick, quivering hands. Every time she lifted them from the keys, they shook. To forestall this, she moved faster and faster, increasing the tempo to a furious rate. At the same time, she sang. Her voice had a strong nasal quality, and it shook as badly as her hands. I watched, wondering which would give out first; the banging hands or the voice. I was amazed when each made it to the end of the song in a jumble: voice, hands, smile, all quavering as the last note trilled its shaky way into the air. Then, regally, she turned on the antique bench and sat enthroned, waiting for the assembled court to pay her homage.

Her grey hair was sparse and straggly with one of those permanents that all the women over 40 had in those days. Pink

Summer Reading

angel-winged glasses slipped down on a rather long and narrow nose. Three long, yellow teeth embroidered her grin. She wore a cheap red-printed housedress, a shapeless blue sweater, and nylons rolled down about her ankles like thick pork sausages. Her feet were encased in green paisley slippers. Everyone seemed to love her. Each person shook her hand or hugged her and before I knew it, it was my turn. Tom propelled me to the front of the group.

"Aunt Edna, this is a new girl. Her name is Gloria."

"Hallo, dearie." Aunt Edna slurped her words and shook with the effects of what I later learned was Parkinson's Disease. She took my hand and, although I felt ashamed of my reaction, I shuddered inwardly, for her hand was boned and blue and she had thick yellow fingernails. Its grip was clammy as she pulled me towards her.

"Give us a kiss!" she exclaimed and, as she returned it, her spittle dribbled a little on my cheek.

"Aunt Edna, would you round up the others for the service in the parlour while we do some singing in the rooms?" Tom asked, and she nodded eagerly.

I was shocked by what I saw in the different rooms. The first bedroom was filled with old women. We chatted with them, held their hands or did small tasks the nurses hadn't had time to do. A husband sat beside his wife's bed. Her abdomen was a swollen mound beneath the blanket. To her dismay, she often passed gas loudly. I learned that her husband, who lived nearby, left

her side only to eat and sleep. At all other times this wizened little man, his face as grey as the blanket which sheltered her, cradled his wife's hand.

Down the hall was a room which was not really a room. It was more like a partitioned landing at the top of the stairs. Lack of windows accented its temporary character. The people there were oblivious to their overcrowded surroundings. A strong odour of sweat and urine co-mingled. Men lay thin-boned, sharp against the sheets, their very strength evaporating. One yelled intermittently at a long-vanished wife; violence was still strong in the weakness of his voice. Another lay vacant-eyed, threaded together with tubes. Most had their eyes closed, and their heads were tilted unnaturally so that their mouths were opened to the air.

In this room we did not stop to chat. Here, without ever being told, I learned that human beings have a spirit which lives and can be addressed even when mind, emotions, and physical strength had vanished. Here, we simply stroked a forehead and a hand, and sang of Jesus' love for them, quietly and with awe for the mystery of life.

Matilda was toothless and lay paralyzed in a private room downstairs. At her side was a Christmas card and a box of chocolates, both six months old. It was pure torture to watch her try to form her words. "My daughter would like to visit me more but she lives so far from here." Matilda was lonely. Her daughter lived in Reddick, a half-hour's drive away.

Across the hall, in one of two dorm-like rooms, I met Harry.

Harry was poor. His wife's bed was in the next room, a women's dorm. All day, until the nursing staff called bedtime, Harry and his wife sat on his bed, or on the chairs between his bed and the next. Whenever her unconnected little-bird chatter grew too anxious and high-pitched, Harry would soothe her by caressing her shoulders. "I love you, dear," he often said. Harry was blind.

It was difficult to sing where the spectre of death seemed to threaten us with our own inevitable future inhabitation of such rooms. It was even more difficult to contemplate returning regularly. Yet return we did, learning from each other and the friends we made there, that to combat such outrage and horror one needs a sense of humour and strengthened love.

After some time, all the groups converged in the main parlour. Corrinne and I waited uncertainly near the entrance. Aunt Edna was thumping the piano. Young people and wheelchair occupants were interspersed.

"Oh, Corrinne," Tom asked, "have you met Ivan? I'm sure he'd like it if you sat near him."

Anxious to please, Corrinne smiled her dazzling smile and moved to where Tom stood. That left me standing alone at the door, feeling peevish that she'd been directed where to go and what to do. Had I realized that Corrinne was to be the target of an insider's joke, I would have been glad of my uncomfortable perch on the shaky piano stool which I found in the far corner.

The meeting began with music. Aunt Edna played

several favourites in rapid succession. Tom read a Bible passage and Eva droned a three-minute, three-point teaching she had prepared. There was silence for a few moments. Then a whiskered gentleman in a brown suit stood up from the couch and asked to have a word. Moving his oddly-bent hands with a poetic eloquence, he spoke with animated conviction.

"Thank you, Reverend Parker," Tom said at his conclusion.

Someone suggested a short hymn-sing next. However, I missed the twinkling of all eyes focused on Corrinne and Ivan, because I was momentarily busy trying to prevent my piano seat from tipping.

Ivan was the youngest person in the nursing home and an anomaly in their midst. Shiny black hair framed a square face gifted with bushy eyebrows and ruddy cheeks. His stocky body more than filled the wheelchair. He exuded a carefree, easy-go-lucky air. What this Ukrainian who spoke only simple English was doing among all these frail and dying old people was beyond me. Perhaps, I later thought, Ivan was an angel sent to stop the Christian Reformed kids from taking themselves too seriously.

Ivan was an incurable romantic, filled with memories of a more vigorous period in his life. He was most happy when a new girl, specifically a blonde, came to sit beside him, holding the red *Psalter Hymnal* open at his favourite hymn. Tonight it was Corrinne's turn.

"Number Four Twenty-seven," requested Ivan, with an angelic smile and a heavy accent. An imperceptible

expectancy flittered across the room as Corrinne innocently turned the pages and politely smiled at Ivan.

"I neet dee effery hour," Ivan bellowed and jabbed Corrinne in the ribs with his elbow, whereupon she moved away slightly, no-doubt supposing him to be spastic.

In the chorus, Ivan really came into his own. "I neet dee," (jab, jab) "oh, I neet dee," (jab, wink, jab) "Effery hour I neet dee!"

Corrinne clearly got the message on the third rousing cry, and the blush which rose from her neck to the roots of her blonde hair was deep red. Ivan grinned salaciously.

Our return to the church basement, where we joined that Sunday evening's Youth Talks, was almost like entering another world. Under a thick umbrella of blue smoke, the Christian Reformed young people of all the neighbouring churches met together to socialize and study. Images of suffering and helplessness retreated in the face of youthful certainty and aggressive jargon. And the after-recess speaker was truly inspiring. The topic he thundered upon was, "The Total Depravity of Man." I am sure that it made a deep impression upon many. In fact, I myself was so convicted that when he requested a song of response, I was the first to raise my hand.

"Number Four Twenty-seven," I said, sweetly. And I smiled, salaciously, at Corrinne.

Anniä Maat lives in Ingersoll, Ont.

Mental Health

Can a Christian be depressed?

Grant W. Mullen

Can a Christian be depressed? Is mental illness a sign of preventable spiritual weakness? Why doesn't biblical counselling always work? Is psychiatric treatment for Christians? Does mental illness come from demons? These questions torment many believers and cause tremendous confusion. This article has arisen out of my concern for the amount of unnecessary suffering that is endured by Christians due to the clouds of uncertainty that surround these issues.

Depression is by far the most common form of mental suffering. It is, however, a poorly defined condition which means different things to different people. We must be able to distinguish between the transient "depression" of someone unhappy about a recent disappointment and the severe crushing despair of one who has for many years lost all interest in life. I choose to use the term discouragement for temporary mood fluctuations which would be commonly referred to as the "blues" and would never be considered an "illness." The term depression is reserved for prolonged disorders of mood which require professional help.

It is not always easy to distinguish between these two conditions and it requires considerable training and experience. There is at present no blood test or X-ray that will diagnose mental illness. Understanding what a person is thinking and feeling is the only way to separate these conditions.

What is depression?

Depression has a very wide variety of symptoms and each individual shows a different pattern. Generally speaking people suffering from depression usually have been sad for prolonged periods. They have lost interest in most activities of life which previously gave them pleasure. They feel defeated, useless, hopeless, unable to pray, punished by God, and unworthy of anyone's love or God's forgiveness. They may

feel that God has left them or is no longer listening to them due to unknowingly committing the "unpardonable sin." They consider themselves to be failures, as Christians and as people. Plagued by guilt, they condemn themselves for not being able to "snap out of it." Some will attack everyone around them as the likely cause for their unhappiness.

Depressed people often have great difficulty falling asleep due to persistent and uncontrollable racing of unpleasant thoughts or worries through their minds. Many will awaken at four a.m. and will be unable to fall asleep again because of the same racing of thoughts. Concentration on work, pleasure or reading becomes impossible while struggling with the continuous stream of unpleasant and depressing thoughts which cannot be kept out of the mind. While reading they will see the words but have to reread the sentence many times before understanding what was said. It is hard for them to keep their minds on anything. Their memories seem to fail and it becomes very difficult to finish any project due to fatigue or lack of interest.

Fatigue becomes overwhelming. Daily responsibilities which were previously easy and pleasant are seen as enormous undertakings. Everything becomes such an effort that all activities are avoided. A depressed person also finds it very hard to make decisions since their self-confidence is so low and concentration is so impaired. Anxiety becomes a continuous thought pattern which cannot be turned off. The depressed person will worry about everything, even tiny details of life which never before

attracted their attention. Intense fear and worry may induce unusual behaviour patterns like repetitive hand washing to rid themselves of a sensation of being dirty. There may be a preoccupation with body symptoms and frequent visits to doctors with complaints that can never be diagnosed or treated.

Socialization is difficult during depression and it becomes very uncomfortable to attend church. Marriage relationships are severely strained due to increasing temper and irritability. Crying becomes a frequent event. There is a tendency to blame others, especially spouses, family members or God for their state of unhappiness.

All of the above symptoms by themselves are common and do not always indicate a mental illness. When, however, a number of these signs are present continuously for over two months, then treatable illness must be suspected. At least five per cent of the population will at some time suffer from one or more episodes of depressive illness. The onset of depression is often during the teen years but at that time the symptoms are dismissed as just an "adolescent phase." Most of my patients have been suffering for over 10 years before they realize that help is available.

Menopause is often blamed for causing depression. While it is true that the hormonal fluctuations of this event will cause mood disturbances, it has been my experience that menopause only increases the severity of a pre-existing depression and brings women to medical attention. In the elderly, depression is often labelled as senility, no treatment is attempted and the condition is ignored.

Depression is the most frequent form of mood disorder. The bipolar or manic depressive mood disorder is the next most common. It is characterized by wide mood fluctuations ranging from deep depression and despair to extreme happiness, euphoria and mania.

During a manic phase a person will talk excessively with words pouring out in an animated continuous stream, interspersed with wit and humour. They will change topics rapidly and never totally finish one thought. They are usually the "life of the party," showing endless energy, developing grandiose plans based on gross over-estimations of their own

ability. When opposed they may show intense uncontrollable rage. They have poor judgment, especially when spending money. They need very little sleep and consider rest to be a waste of time. During a "high" they are very reluctant to seek treatment since they feel so great and powerful. Manic episodes are often followed by periods of profound depression.

What causes mood disorders?

This is a very controversial area. Christians usually make the error of only seeing mental illness in spiritual terms. They presume that the victim has failed in his or her walk with God or has sinned, and this is the natural consequence. Some consider that all mental abnormalities come from demons. There is no doubt that demonic activity can cause behaviour and mental disturbances. I have been surprised at the number of my psychiatric patients who have had occult experiences, including face-to-face contact with demons. Considering, however, the very large number of people with mood disorders, a demonic cause is still the exception rather than the rule.

The most common cause of a mood disorder illness is that of an inherited chemical imbalance in the mood control centre of the brain.

The brain is divided into

regions or "control centres" that direct every activity of the body. There are very specific chemical substances called neurotransmitters which are produced by brain cells to regulate body functions. If anything happens to disrupt the production of these chemicals then the control centre will malfunction and symptoms or disability will result. It is now well established that mental illnesses are usually the result of an imbalance in the chemicals associated with mood control. This tendency to malfunction is often inherited. Symptoms may just appear without reason, or depression may come as a result of stressful circumstances that bring out the inherited tendency to have a mood disorder. As a result of the discovery of the above facts, depression is now seen as a physical illness needing medical treatment.

What is the treatment for depression?

There is no one treatment that solves all depressions. Christians can be particularly difficult to treat. Depression will interfere with all relationships, including that with God. An evangelical will often conclude that he or she has primarily a spiritual problem which is separating him or her from God and draining away spiritual and mental energy. Such people will then turn to a large number of Christian self-help books to try and lift their moods. They recommend solutions which generally work only for those with transient discouragements, not illnesses of mood. The Christian may turn to "hyperfaith" and "rebuke" the problem or deny that the symptoms exist. The "cassettes" explain that if one has enough faith then we can banish all suffering. When this method doesn't work, depressed people will assume, as the tapes teach, that they must have sin in their life and that it is their own fault that they are suffering. This sequence of events worsen their depression.

Some TV evangelists teach that a true Christian will never

suffer from depression and that it is a sign of defeat, disobedience and unbelief. Any attempt to get help from "professionals" is an admission that "the Cross isn't enough" and that we don't have sufficient resources in God. Pastoral counselling may reinforce this and intensify the depressive guilt from which the person is already suffering. Suggestions to pray, read more scripture or confess sin, generally produce few results during a depressive illness. These methods only address the symptoms not the underlying cause.

The medical treatment of mood disorders involves the use of drugs which are extremely effective in restoring the normal balance of neurotransmitter chemicals. For depression there is a family of medications called antidepressants. For bipolar or manic depressives the drug lithium is used. I have seen many depressed patients who have had years of unsuccessful counselling return to normal mental and spiritual functioning after only six weeks of medication treatment. These

Continued on page 13...

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Mental Health

A matter of life and death

Thomas J. Verace

"How can I help?" I cried inside.

The tears were now rolling down John's cheeks. "No one understands the way I feel," he said, and at least for me, he was right. I didn't.

"The pain is so great I wish I were dead!" he continued. I knew that was no idle wish. He meant killing himself and I was scared! John was suicidal.

I didn't understand his feelings that no one cared, that he felt worthless, hopeless and trapped. To me John had the world before him. He was a college graduate with a degree in business administration. His father's already successful business was just waiting to be taken over. He also had a lovely wife and two beautiful children. He was right, I didn't understand. But here he is in my living room. How could I help?

All of us at times feel unequipped, unprepared and helpless. Maybe you, like me, have been in this situation before and really do want to be able to help. Or maybe you've never been there. But you realize as you grow in your relationships in the local church that one day it probably will happen. Here are some things to remember.

Listen

Death and life are in the power of the tongue (Prov. 18:21).

The most effective and helpful response we can have in a situation like this is to listen. I mean *really* listen. With our whole body — our eyes, our ears, our face. Get to know the person's feelings. Know how she hurts. Affirm his feelings. What will hurt someone like John terribly in a time such as this is if we show any disinterest whatsoever. That will not only hurt the person but will also remove us from the position where we can help. We won't be trusted if we won't listen.

When someone comes to us with their inner struggles and pain, we must realize they are asking for help and that they need it desperately. People who talk about suicide are also those who attempt and complete suicide. The person's talking with you is an indirect appeal for help. If John does not get it from you, he may feel his only escape from his excruciating pain is through suicide. You need to exercise your spiritual gift of patience ... now! Nothing is more important. Death and life are in the power of the tongue; we need to listen.

What do I listen for?

Two things are worth listening for.

Motive. We need to listen for why John or Mary is feeling this way. Why is the pain so intense? If I can communicate through my listening that I am

with him, John won't feel so alone. And that aloneness is a tremendous burden to him right now. "Why Mary? Why? What's going on?" If I can ask those questions through my ears and eyes and face without opening my mouth, I'll be of help. She wants desperately to be relieved of pain, and someone else "knowing" is the start of that relief.

Method. We also need to listen for how John is planning on completing the act of suicide. The answer to the method is worth probing. If he has everything in place (Saturday, 7:00 p.m. with a 38 revolver) to kill himself ... someone needs to know it to be able to prevent it. Remember, such people want to live more than they want to die. They just don't want to live in such terrible pain. It is very important to listen for how they are planning to kill themselves. This is worth verbally probing for.

Choose words carefully

A gentle tongue is a tree of life, but perverseness in it breaks the spirit (Prov. 15:4).

Perverseness in this situation may be described as a flippant attitude when it comes to listening and speaking. We cannot whisk away a person's sadness by comments like, "Oh come on, Mary, it's not that bad! Come on, John, let's go see a movie, you'll feel better." Don't say, "I understand" unless you've been there. If you haven't been there, you don't understand. If you have been there, let her know that. Your relief from pain will offer hope during this difficult time.

The Greek word for compassion in the New Testament is a word which describes the internal organs in human beings. That is a picture of the care that must be taken in our response. The person's pain is life-threatening and our response must be life-protecting. "You must be suffering terribly right now, Mary, I can't imagine what you're going through."

Instil hope

Anxiety in a man's heart weighs him down, but a good word makes him glad (Prov. 12:25).

Hope may be brought by helping such people realize that the "aloneness" feeling is so strong that they probably have believed it to be true, that they really are all alone. That is not true. They *aren't* all alone. You will help by reassuring them that there are many people who are "with them" during this difficult time. Although those friends and relations are not aware of the problem, parents, spouses, pastors and friends all love them very much and would drop everything for them if

how they felt were known.

The truth in the scripture of our Lord "always" being with us still stands true. Suicidal people need to hear that again. In Matt. 26:38 Jesus was troubled "to the point of death." That Jesus also went through a difficult depression may be unknown to them. It can also be helpful, especially alongside the truth in Heb. 2:18, which relates Jesus' suffering to helping those who are tempted.

Get professional help

... But the tongue of the wise brings healing (Prov. 12:18).

Mary needs to be told that she needs help, professional help. You must be strong as you say this. Be firm. She must get professional help. She may not like this idea and a suicidal person usually will resist this suggestion because nobody wants to admit to needing professional help. What you must understand to help and what must be conveyed to her is that there is no choice. "I have no intention of keeping this secret, Mary; we are calling your husband and pastor." The family needs to know and also someone who can refer Mary to the best professional. Her pastor should know who can best help her.

She is the one who should make the calls. Let her do the asking for help. But remember, do not leave with her promise of calling for help. Stay with her until you know her pastor and family have taken over. She will be able to talk her husband out of professional help. She won't have such success with her objective pastor. Drive her yourself to

the hospital or pastor's office and have her husband meet you there.

Instil support

There are friends who pretend to be friends, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother (Prov. 18:24).

Something that *must* be received from John is a promise that he will not kill himself unless he first contacts you. That might delay the completion of suicide long enough to prevent it.

Probably the most realistic promise in John's mind will be the assurance of your support through this difficulty. Remember, you're the one John came to for help. Use that fact in helping him. "John, I'm so glad you told me about what you're going through, I want you to know I'll be here for you whenever you need me." But don't say that unless you mean it! Don't pretend to care if you don't care! A few days will go by and John will know the difference. That won't help him.

Support in prayer

He heals the brokenhearted, and binds up their wounds (Ps. 147:3).

God is the Great Physician. Remember that! The most powerful help you can provide for your friend is prayer. Pray with him or her when you have the opportunity. Also, pray for him or her every day and every moment you think of it. He or she needs your prayer.

It's been seven months since John first walked into my living room. He's no longer talking about his desire to end his life. I've learned as that sounds like

good news it also is a dangerous time. John and those who share his pain may not have the strength and courage to complete suicide during extreme depression, it often is completed when they begin to recover. They have a particularly bad day and also the strength to complete suicide. Many suicides come when the friend was "just getting better." So we hang in there.

John called me again the other day. He calls often. Sometimes I wish he wouldn't. That he would just "trust the Lord" and his depression would lift away. But I know that isn't reality. Yes, John needs to trust the Lord and increase in his disciplines of walking with Christ. But often long periods of unbiblical behaviour bring the depression, and often time-proven biblical patterns need to be experienced to lift the depression.

I wish I could write a "and he lived happily ever after" ending to this story. But I can't. Many times we must endure in our help. Continue to be there as a friend. Continue to pray, even after many months. I hope and pray John will not need to lean on people to make it. But today he needs to lean. So today, I'll obey my Lord, and help. So I'll close, "and they lived, supporting ever after."

Thomas Verace has an M.A. in counselling and has dealt with many suicidal people. He is the past of Christian Fellowship Free Church in Chicago, Illinois.

Can a Christian be depressed?

... continued from page 12. drugs are not habit forming and do not include valium which is just a tranquilizer. They are not "uppers" or "happy pills," they only restore normal mood and the ability to control one's thoughts.

ECT or "shock" treatments, though less commonly used, are also very effective in some people. It is done over several days and painlessly under general anesthesia. The "shock" will rapidly restore the chemical imbalances to normal.

A seriously depressed person is helplessly in the grip of an illness he or she can't control.

Return to productive life

It is important that people realize that mood disorders, like depression, are illnesses with available medical treatment just like any other health problem. It is unfair the way the depressed are treated

with fear, suspicion, hushed embarrassment and condemnation. Most people suffering depression can be totally cured with medication and returned to a normal productive life.

Our communities are full of hurting people looking for answers to life's struggles. Many of them will have mood disorders needing treatment. They are hurt when friends declare that depression is a sign of weakness or deficient faith.

I have found the following book to be an indispensable tool in my practice: *The Masks of Melancholy, a Christian Physician Looks at Depression and Suicide* by Dr. John White, published by Intervarsity Press.

I require all of my psychiatric patients to read it. It is written by an evangelical pastor who is also a psychiatrist. The book very clearly explains the symptoms of mood disorders, the causes and treatments.

Many are suffering

needlessly from depression and other mood disorders. They are unaware that treatment is available. Through public education, more depressed people will realize their need for treatment and they will no longer see themselves as social outcasts.

Grant W. Mullen is a family practitioner at Livingston Medical Centre, Grimsby, Ont.

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Toward a new understanding of mental illness and suicide

George Nichols

Suicide. I lost my son Bill this way. He was a fine young man. He fought bravely, but silently and alone.

People didn't used to talk much about suicide, at least not in public. Even today when someone takes his or her own life we hear people say that he made the wrong decision, or that she chose a permanent solution to a temporary problem. There is shame on the person; he shouldn't have done it, it wasn't worth dying for; she wasn't strong enough, or didn't have enough faith. And there is shame on the family, the family has failed too.

These old attitudes and opinions about suicide reflect a strong sense that we are each responsible for own lives and our own behaviour, for our own success or failure. Certain things, however, are outside our control. For example, we cannot accept responsibility or blame for earthquakes or sickness, including mental sickness. And now these old misperceptions about suicide are causing harm by keeping us from the action needed to prevent such tragedies.

We seem to be completely unaware that *nearly all people who commit suicide (95 per cent of them) suffer from a treatable mental illness.*¹ Mental illness is common and affects one out of every four or five of us during our lifetime. Yet public understanding of mental illness is poor. According to surveys last year, many of us still think that mental illness is chosen and can be willed away, that it is a result of emotional weakness, and that it is a result of bad parenting.² Misperceptions like these must be replaced by better information.

For example, suicide is much more than a "wrong choice." It is not a normal choice by a normal brain. Such a decision is made by a poor sick brain which cannot function normally. It is not under normal self-control. It cannot handle life's daily flow. Such sick people themselves may suffer great anguish at their own lack of understanding or the apparent hopelessness of their situation that they turn to death to relieve the awful emotional distress, not knowing or believing that there is a cure.

Preventing suicide is not the complicated social problem we had thought. Prevention depends mainly on recognizing and treating the underlying mental illness. And for this, public help and understanding are essential. We are not being asked to identify mental illnesses such as schizophrenia and personality disorders, but to help in recognizing "depressive illness" — the one which causes most suicides.

Social stresses such as failure, loss, and isolation often appear to bring on a depressive illness, but depression *itself* produces social misery. And sometimes it pops up when people are not having any problems. Depression is not primarily a social or a counselling matter. It is an illness which seems to be caused by a mixture of factors. Genes and body chemistry make some persons and some families exceptionally prone to depression. And for reasons which are not clear, depressive illness is present in many alcoholics and drug abusers; such people often have a rather dismal future but their outlook improves considerably when we can recognize the associated depressive illness and treat it.

A dangerous illness

Depression is not the same as "the blues" which we all have from time to time, and it's not just being unhappy. Depression is a highly curable medical illness which ends fatally for about 10 to 15 per cent of the people who have it and are not treated. It is one of the most common (about as common as high blood pressure) and most destructive illnesses in North America today. It is also one of the least recognized. While high blood pressure may kill someone in 20 years, depression can kill immediately. Recognizing and treating it correctly not only saves lives but prevents much needless suffering in those who are depressed, and in their families and friends who also suffer.

Some depressions are mild, others are severe. Some depressions last for months, others last for years, and some last a lifetime. Some come and go or have ups and downs (manic depressive illness), and at times depression is confused with schizophrenia and other mental illness.

The basic signs

There are still no reliable laboratory test for depression illness. We recognize it by its symptoms and signs — and by asking questions. A person with depressive illness usually shows several of these signs together, lasting two weeks or longer. Here they are, in plain language — the same basic signs which the psychiatrists use³:

- A very "down" mood (You may feel gloomy yourself just talking with a person who is depressed. His or her down mood may show in themes and revealing remarks. And sometimes you must look behind the smile, the behaviour, the alcohol, and the drugs.)
- Loss of interest in everything
- Feelings of hopelessness,

loss, guilt

- Low energy
- Difficulty thinking or remembering
- Change in appetite, weight, or sleep
- Thoughts of death and suicide

People who are depressed, especially youths, seldom talk directly about their painful feelings. They may deny them or feel ashamed of them. They can't come to you; you must see their problem and go to them. So whenever your suspicions are aroused that someone is depressed, then you **MUST ASK A FEW QUESTIONS** to bring out these basic signs. These questions are very important, but ask them softly, gently, one-on-one, and in a caring way. The doctor must do the same in making his or her own diagnosis.

"John, you sound kind of down. How are you?"

"Are you worried about something?"

"What are you doing that you enjoy these days?"

"Do you have trouble getting started doing things?"

"Have trouble thinking, concentrating, deciding?"

"Any trouble sleeping? Has your weight changed?"

"Are you disappointed in yourself? Do you blame yourself?"

"Have you thought of suicide?"

You may not feel qualified to ask these questions, but you can do no harm, the stakes are high, and you may be the only one this person will ever see who has guessed what's wrong and who knows what to do. Have you seen anyone who was depressed this week? Chances are you did.

Depression has different faces

Suicide has increased among youths, but it continues to be most common among older adults. The underlying depressive illness seems to be the same at all ages, even when it occurs in very young children. Just as we all look different on the outside (face, clothes, height), we also have differences on the inside, so that the same depressive illness may show itself differently in different people, and instead of a quiet sadness, we sometimes see depression as: a heavy personal problem; medical symptoms persisting without apparent cause (stomach ache, headache, etc.); unusual anxiety, nervousness, irritability; trouble with alcohol, drugs, behaviour.

One of the most common ways for depression to show itself is — as a heavy personal problem, and you may think, "If I had those troubles, I might feel that way too." Or you may think the person just



Photo: Call Them Canadians

"Some depressions are mild, others are severe. Some depressions last for months, others last for years, and some last a lifetime."

has a bad attitude about life's problems. But whenever you find someone complaining, perhaps too much, about either a medical symptom or a difficult personal problem, stop and think, "Is this a problem? Or is this a depression?" Then ask those questions. Problems need counselling, but depression needs medical care.

Sometimes you can tell more about a person's mood by noticing the things he watches, hears, reads, or draws. Themes of gloom, sadness, and death are very serious signs. We must also pay attention to those revealing little remarks which we sometimes hear and ignore, such as "I just don't care anymore." Check it out. Ask those questions.

Many people look to their religious faith for help when they feel depressed — not realizing that these feelings may be due to a curable sickness. Prayer is important in all things, but need for prayer is no more important for someone with a depressive illness than for someone with pneumonia, or diabetes, or Alzheimer's disease. As one minister told me, he has "learned that people feel tremendous shame about being depressed, when actually they should feel no more remorse about depression than they should about breaking a leg."⁴

Youths are action oriented, and the signs which warn of suicide here often show up as a change in behaviour — high risk activities, multiple accidents, truancy, stealing, lying, violence, poor judgment, and impulsiveness. And there is added concern when there has been the loss of a boyfriend or girlfriend, conflict with peers, family stress, or suicide in the community.

What to do

If you suspect depression, or if you are concerned that there is a chance of suicide, don't decide to watch and wait. Don't let that person's brain get used to sick thinking. And don't let outdated stigma against psychiatric care kill your child⁵ or your friend. Step right in and take him or her to your doctor, or to a psychiatrist who can verify your amateur

diagnosis (other diseases and conditions can imitate depression) and who can prescribe the antidepressant medicines which are so often needed. Effective medicine for treating depression created a revolution in psychiatry 30 years ago. The original medicine, imipramine, or Tofranil, is still useful. It works very well, is relatively safe, is not habit forming and is no more of a "crutch" than penicillin.

First, the rescue. Psychotherapy is important but it will be more effective later.⁶

Remember: grief needs sympathy, problems need counselling; depression needs medical care. In my medical practice, along with our patients with high blood pressure and other illnesses, we always seem to have half-a-dozen folks recovering from depressive illness. If anything can awaken a trace of hope in a person filled with despair, it is to hear YOU say that we are quite familiar with her condition, and despite her black mood of today, the outlook for her recovery is usually very good, because we have a good treatment and a *new understanding* of this ancient disease.

Ref.: ¹ Roy, A.: Suicide. In: Kaplan HI, Sadock BJ, eds. *Comprehensive Textbook of Psychiatry*. Philadelphia: Williams & Wilkins Pub. Co. 1989: 1414

² Modified from a public bulletin by the National Institute of Mental Health, Rockville, Maryland, 1989

³ Wender, PH. *Depressive Illness: Recognition & Treatment*, 1988

⁴ Jones, WH. Personal communication, 1986

⁵ Fink, PJ. *Diagnosis & Treatment of Depression & Suicidal Chd & Adolescents*, 1990

For additional information on suicide and mental illness, you may send a stamped self-addressed envelope to George Nichols, M.D., 424 East Longview Dr., Appleton, WI 54911.

Dr. Nichols is an internist in private practice in Appleton, Wisconsin, who has had training in psychiatry as well as medical medicine, and has worked with suicidal people in preventing drug abuse.

The myth of degradable plastics

Henry Brouwer

As municipalities face the very serious problem of solid waste disposal, advertisements are urging consumers to purchase degradable plastic products, either biodegradable or photodegradable. Many consumers see this trend as a solution to the problem of waste disposal, allowing them to continue the use of plastics, particularly in packaging. But are these new products really a solution to the waste disposal problem?

The very reasons for the success of plastics in the marketplace has resulted in the problem of disposal of waste plastics. Plastics have displaced many other materials (such as paper, glass and metals) because they are strong, long lasting, rustproof, non-toxic, inexpensive, unaffected by moisture, easy to manufacture and may be formed into almost any conceivable shape. Today plastics can be tailored for virtually any end-use, with packaging products (e.g. shopping bags, milk bags, blisterpacks) being one important application. So what eventually becomes of them, once the consumer is finished with the product?

Most of the solid waste that is generated in a municipality is sent to land-fill sites where the solid materials are buried in the garbage dumps. But municipalities are becoming painfully aware that such space is rapidly running out. The city of Toronto, for example, urgently needs new land-fill sites to dispose of its garbage. Other municipalities are faced with the same dilemma. Some recycling and incineration of wastes occurs, but at the present time most garbage in North America is buried — out of sight, out of mind? Not necessarily.

Methane gas, generated under the anaerobic (lack of oxygen) conditions in a land-fill site, is a flammable gas and presents a hazard to homes built near a garbage dump. Leaching of chemicals from a dump site may contaminate the surface and ground water.

What happens to the garbage once it is buried? Recent studies have shown that very little degradation of even the organic wastes, which we normally think of as being biodegradable, occurs by the micro-organisms living in the ground. Why not? In order for biodegradation to take place, moisture and oxygen are required. Because garbage in a dump is compacted by bulldozers and covered over with clay, little water and oxygen can get to the garbage.

A recent article in *Discover* magazine (April 1990) reports that excavation of dump sites in the U.S. from the 1950s yielded newspapers in near-mint condition, kitchen wastes that appeared fairly fresh, and tin cans that had barely rusted. It is now becoming obvious that the garbage placed in our dumps does not decompose within a

few years. The decomposition that does occur releases methane gas, a gas that contributes to the greenhouse effect.

Plastic not the sole culprit

Contrary to what many people think, plastics make up only about 10 per cent of municipal garbage. Typically, garbage consists of about 37 per cent wood products (e.g. newspapers, cardboard, packaging), another 18 per cent yard wastes (e.g. leaves, grass, branches) and approximately 10 per cent each of glass, metals, plastics and food wastes, with the rest consisting of an assortment of other materials. Thus eliminating plastics from the waste stream will not resolve the garbage disposal problem.

In the light of the above, is there a role for biodegradable plastics? As long as we continue with our existing methods of waste disposal (land-filling), then whether plastics are biodegradable or not makes little difference because once they are buried, little biological breakdown occurs. It may ease the conscience of the consumer who uses biodegradable plastics, thinking that he or she is contributing less to pollution. But in the final analysis, little would change.

A second type of degradable plastic is available as well — one that breaks down upon exposure to sunlight. As you well know, if your lawnchairs are left in the sun, after a few years the webbing deteriorates and needs to be replaced. This is due to the fact that the ultraviolet light in sunlight breaks the chemical bonds in the polymers causing them to become weaker and eventually break down.

Photodegradable plastics use special chemicals that speed up this process, so that after a few months the plastic becomes brittle and breaks down into small pieces but does not disappear. Again, if such plastics end up in the land-fill sites, little will happen to them because there is no light present to aid the breakdown process.

An important potential use of photodegradable plastics would be in products that end up as litter at the beaches, roadsides, parks, and so on. Since litter is exposed to sunlight, any litter consisting of photodegradable plastic will slowly disintegrate, break down into smaller pieces and at

least be less visible. It may also result in a decrease in wildlife deaths caused by ingestion of or entanglement in plastic products, such as bags and packaging rings for beer and pop cans.

Another concern raised about degradable plastics is that they would not be recyclable because if those plastics were mixed with normal plastics to manufacture new products, those products would not be as strong. Generally, recycling would not present a problem, depending on the end use of the recycled material. If the recycled plastic were used for lawn furniture, synthetic wood, plastic drain pipes and similar products, then pigments and chemicals would be added to absorb the ultraviolet rays of the sun and, due to the bulky nature of the product, trace amounts of biodegradable plastic would not be affected by micro-organisms.

Canadians produce most garbage

Thus, although waste resulting from plastics is a serious problem, there are a number of things that are much more important to do now rather than investing a lot of research, time, and money into developing degradable plastics. A recent *Maclean's* article entitled "Crackdown on Waste" (May 14, 1990) reports that Canadians produce more garbage than citizens of any other country, with packaging comprising fully one-third of the 27 million tons of solid waste generated in 1988. The goal of the Ministry of the Environment is to achieve a 590 per cent reduction in packaging waste by the year 2000, a goal that the packaging industry finds hard to accept.

As a nation we have done little to be good stewards of the resources that God has given us. We have buried our "talents," rather than using them. Perhaps someday in the future we will be mining the garbage dumps of North America for their metal, glass, plastic and fuel content. In the meantime, Canadian citizens must look very seriously at reducing their wastes. Composting of yard, food and kitchen wastes could easily be done by each home owner and would reduce the quantity of buried waste.

Why, for example, are grass clippings and leaves put into the garbage? Why not simply leave them on the yard or garden? Earthworms and other organisms in the soil will decompose them and at the same time enrich the soil. God created a host of microorganisms to help decompose these yard "wastes" and recycle the nutrients. These organisms can



Photo: Bert Witvoet

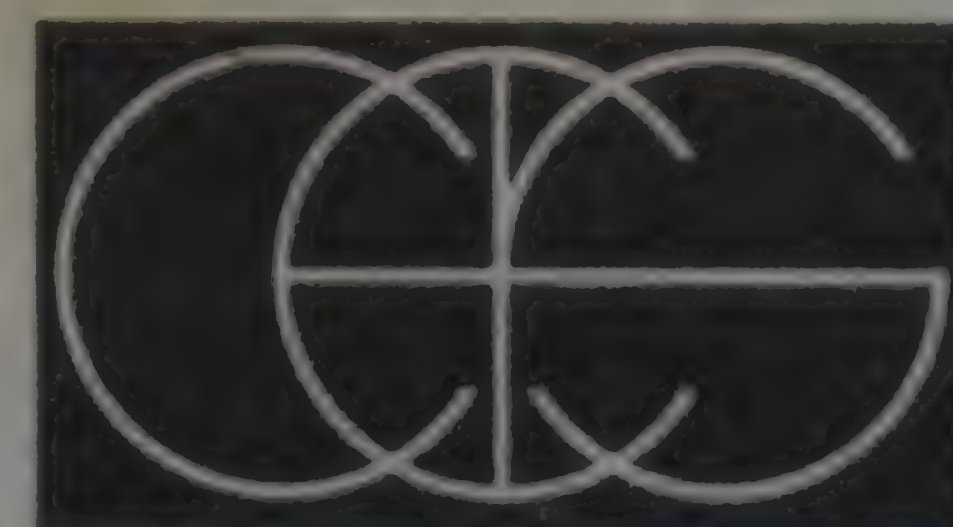
Consider the packaging on what you buy: less is better.

do a much better job in your garden than in a garbage dump.

Take a careful look at the wastes you put at the curb each week and ask yourself the following questions: Should I have bought this in the first place? Can I reuse or recycle it? Can I compost it in my backyard? There will always be some need for landfill sites, but

if we are to avoid serious waste disposal problems we need to live much more stewardly now, and not depend on so-called solutions such as degradable plastics.

Henry Brouwer is assistant professor of chemistry at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont.

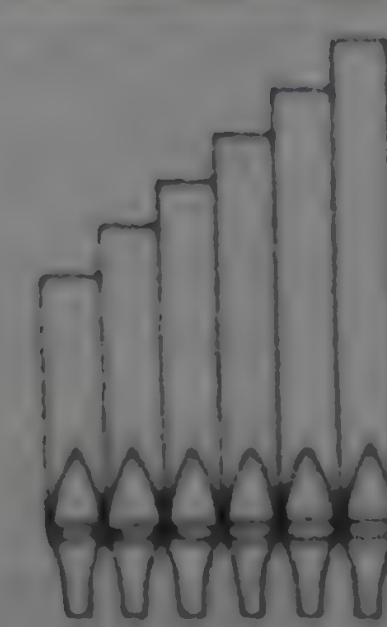


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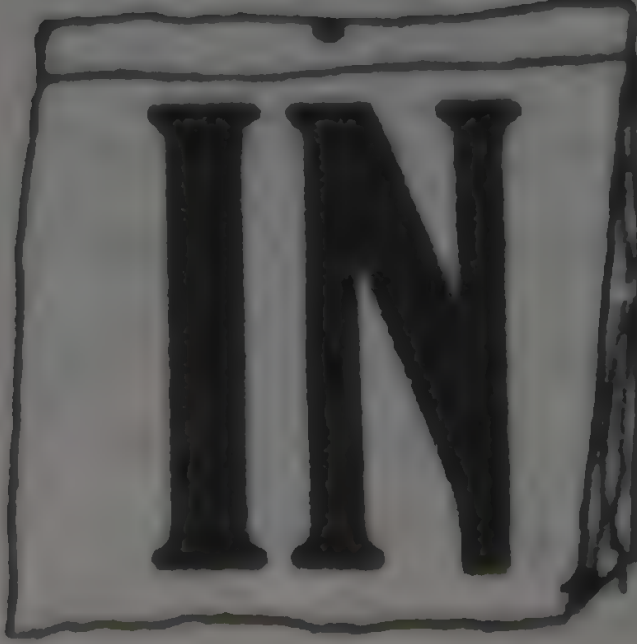
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Peter and Marja are



Dear P & M:

I have a friend who has joined the Oddfellows lodge in our town. It's not like the Freemasons, he tells me. There are no secret rituals. Men get together once a week in the Oddfellows hall and listen to a speaker and enjoy each other's company. The lodge also bought a farm somewhere in the province which is meant as a retreat or camp for handicapped children.
My friend does not go to our church much anymore. He hates it when sermons are longer than 10 minutes. It seems that he thinks religion is too many words and not enough fellowship and action. I find myself running out of reasons to help change his mind. In fact, I am beginning to listen to sermons with his ears and am beginning to find them too wordy and church services too ritualistic. What can I do?

Dear Listening with Another's Ears:

We bring different expectations to church and we're disappointed if those aren't met. From the sounds of it, your friend is a man of action who listened in vain for encouragement from the pulpit to do good in his community. He has rightfully concluded that faith without action and deeds is useless and dead. Consequently he has met his need for social service through a club, since according to him his church is mostly talk and little action.
He may have a point; it's impossible for us to judge. But as you hear the sermons and experience the worship service through his ears it appears from your letter that you agree with his assessment.
If you also discover that your pastor rarely or never has anything supportive to say to those who serve in the community, you should make him aware of the effect this negligence has had on your friend and is beginning to have on you.
Unfortunately, while possibly having a valid criticism, your friend has thrown out the baby with the bathwater. He has gone to the extreme expressed in James 2:18, "You have faith; I have deeds." James points out, however, that your faith in Christ is the foundation for our fruitbearing. It isn't one or the other; it's both. As we draw closer to the Lord we find ourselves more willing and able to serve our neighbours.
Your letter demonstrates the value of listening to the familiar through the ears of

another, as when we take an unchurched neighbour to church. Such experiences often push us to ask some important questions about the content and style of our worship.
Occasionally, therefore, all of us should listen with a different set of ears. Try to imagine what you would hear during a church service if you were a child, a teenager, a senior citizen, a recent convert or a disillusioned adult. What would the sermon communicate if you were a member of the opposite sex or a visitor from the community?
Your friend may have a legitimate complaint but he should not cut himself off from the faith community which ought to equip him for service and outreach in Jesus' name. As for you, hang on to the biblical ideal of James 2:22 which sees faith and action working together and faith being made complete by what one does.

Dear P & M:

My dad has a special chair that no one else is supposed to sit in. Whenever we get visitors, they ask my Dad what his chair is so that they can sit somewhere else. No one asks my Mom if she has a chair. I ask myself, why should dads have their own chair, anyway? What do you think?

Dear Special Chair:

This practice goes back to a tradition of working fathers coming home exhausted and needing a place to crash. Many of us can remember our dads relaxing in their LazyBoys and napping behind their propped up newspapers while the supper table was being set.
There's nothing wrong with having a favourite chair; in fact, we think every family member who wants one should have one. The idea of everyone having a special place reminds us of the days of peace and safety under Solomon when each person was pictured under his own vine and fig tree.
You wondered why no-one ever asks your mom if she has a chair. The answer is very simple. Every other chair belongs to her.

Peter and Marja Slofstra are a pastor and wife team living in St. Catharines, Ont. They are assisted by an advisory panel consisting of: Sam Da Silva, Ineke Brouwer-Parlevliet, Tom Zevl, Bert Witvoet.

Marriages

BANDSTRA-HARDEN:
Believing that the Lord has brought them together, our children,

ANITA
daughter of Mike and Jenny Bandstra of Lindsay, Ont., and

GREG
son of Don and Elizabeth Harnden of Orono, Ont., will exchange their marriage vows on Saturday, August 11, 1990, D.V., at the Lindsay Chr. Ref. Church at 2:30 p.m. They chose as their wedding text, Ps. 100:5. Rev. Charles T. Fennema officiating.
Future address: R.R.#2, Port Perry, ON L9L 1B3

GLASBERGEN-BOEREFYN:
"To be loved is to know happiness; to give love is to know the joy of sharing."
In the spirit of Christian Joy, we,

ELLY
and
MARTIN
invite you to share in our joy on Saturday, July 28, 1990, at 2 p.m., when we exchange marriage vows and ask God's blessing on our union at Covenant Chr. Ref. Church in St. Catharines, Ont.
We invite you for refreshments after the service.
Future address: 136 Mountain St., Grimsby, ON L3M 4E7

Anniversaries

1965 August 7 1990
"I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go, I will counsel you and watch over you" (Ps. 32:8).
With thankfulness to God, we are pleased to announce the 25th wedding anniversary of our parents,


NICK and DOREEN BAKKER
(nee Meima)
May the Lord continually bless and guide you in your future years. Congratulations and love from your children:
Jannette & Mike (fiance)
Douglas
Nancy
Helen
Home address: R.R.#6, Box 47, Bowmanville, ON L1C 3K7

More anniversaries and obituaries on next page.

Classified

Anniversaries	Anniversaries	Anniversaries	Anniversaries	Personal
<div></div> <div><p><i>Congratulations to Laurens and Cornelia Kaldewey (nee Scheurwater) who will celebrate, D.V., their 50th wedding anniversary on August 14, 1990.</i></p></div> <div><p>Soest Sarnia 1940 August 14 1990 We are very grateful to the Lord that we may announce the 50th wedding anniversary of our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents,</p><p>LAURENS and CORNELIA KALDEWAY (nee Scheurwater)</p><p>It is our prayer that the Lord will continue to bless them and keep them in his care. With love and congratulations from your family:</p><p>Marg & John Vanderlaan — Port Lambton, Ont. Corinne & Rick, Elsa, John, Lauren Bert & Minnie Kaldeway — Orono, Ont. Laurens, Henry, Cornelia Herman & Cheryl Kaldeway — Brigden, Ont. Todd & Pauline, Coby & Marc, Jamie & Kim, Michael, Tara John & Karen Kaldeway — Sarnia, Ont. Laurens, Cora-Lynne, Raymond, Janette and five great-grandchildren. Open house will be held, Saturday, August 11, 1990, at Pineview, 1310 Exmouth St., Sarnia, Ont., from 3-5 p.m. Best wishes only please. Home address: Pineview, 1310 Exmouth St., Apt. 214, Sarnia, ON N7S3X9</p><p>On August 8, 1940, at 2:00 p.m. in Aduard, Groningen,</p><p>HENK WESTERHOFF and HILLIE VANDERVEEN</p><p>were married. This year, their children and grandchildren look forward to celebrating with them their 50th wedding anniversary. Congratulations Mom and Dad! We pray God will continue to keep you in his loving care.</p><p>Ceus & Nelly Westerhoff Andrew & Melinda Regnerus, Kendrick & Elizabeth Westerhoff, Jennifer, Trevor Reinder & Dianne Westerhoff David, Lisa Leo & Irene Jonker Peter & Linda (fiancee), Derek, Cheryl, Anthony David & Catharina Dryfhout Helena, Renee, Jackie, Steven Peter & Margaret Kingma David, Carolyn, Anna Home address: 7900 McLaughlin Rd., Holland Christian Homes, Apt. C 1106, Brampton, ON L6V 3N2</p></div>	<div><p>Obituaries</p><p>1905 1990 On July 1, 1990, God called home</p><p>ANTONIE BOOT</p><p>"Jesus said: 'I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man comes to the Father, but by me'" (John 14:6). Lovingly remembered by:</p><p>His wife Neeltje C. Boot-van der Wekken Joanne & Carl Bylenga — Surrey, B.C. Case & Aly Boot — Sioux Center, Iowa Jackie & Mike Roche — Vancouver, B.C. Jennie & Bert Opden Dries — Cloverdale, B.C. Johnnie & Sharon Boot — Chilliwack, B.C. Corrie & Marius de Groot — Alder-grove, B.C. Helen & Bill Versluis — Squamish, B.C. Pete & Shirley Boot — Abbotsford, B.C. Nellie Ann Boot — Vancouver, B.C. Dan & Marilyn Boot — Victoria, B.C. Ann & Henk Oenema — Clearbrook, B.C. 39 grandchildren and 37 great-grandchildren. Home address: #62 Ebenezer Home, 33433 Marshall Rd., Abbotsford, BC V2S 1K8</p><p>"How blessed is the one whom thou does choose and bring near to thee, to dwell in thy courts" (Ps. 65:4). On July 3, 1990, the Lord chose to take home,</p><p>GEORGE DUPON</p><p>Born July 12, 1908, Friesland. You were thoughtful and generous in quiet ways. The things you did and made showed you cared. When life became a struggle, your cheerful face and kind words we will never forget. Your patience and determination we'll never match! Sadly missed by his wife Barbara DuPon. Dear father of: Ed & Dixie DuPon — Chatsworth Dick & (Beverly deceased) DuPon — Hamilton Joyce & Peter Tilstra — Smithville Ann & Marty Botbyl — Queenston Peter DuPon (deceased) Mettie & Bill Hoekman — Brampton Ray & Wendy DuPon — Guelph Brian & Mary Ellen DuPon — Niagara Falls Jennie & George Smith — Simcoe Fred & Maria DuPon — Renton 24 grandchildren, four great-grandchildren. Home address: 76 Town Centre Dr., Townsend, ON N0A 1S0</p></div>	<div><p>1930 August 21 1990 With joy and thanksgiving to the Lord for the life and service of our parents, we hope to celebrate the 60th wedding anniversary of,</p><p>GERRIT CHRISTIAAN STRONKS and JOHANNA STRONKS-HEINEN</p><p>"The Lord will keep you from all harm and danger He will watch over your life The Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore." Psalm 121:7: Congratulations from:</p><p>Dick & Wilma Stronks — Burlington William & Gloria Stronks — Grand Rapids John & Wilma Stronks — Ancaster Ernie & Rie Stronks — Burlington Joyce & John Visser — Barrie Trudy & Martin Reitsma — Brantford Hank & Sue Stronks — New Dundee Jack & Georgie Stronks — Brantford also with love from the 27 grandchildren and 21 great-grandchildren. Open house will be held on Tuesday, August 21, 1990, from 7-9 p.m. in the Trinity Tower recreation room of Holland Christian Homes, Brampton, Ont. Best wishes only. Home address: Apt. 2611, 7900 McLaughlin Rd., Brampton, ON L6V 3N2</p></div> <div></div> <div><p><i>Congratulations to Willem and Anna Spoelstra (nee Vellenga) who will celebrate, D.V., their 40th wedding anniversary on August 10, 1990.</i></p></div> <div><p>Leeuwarden, Hamilton, Friesland Ontario 1950 August 10 1990 With thanksgiving and praise to our covenant God for his faithfulness, we, the children and grandchildren, of,</p><p>WILLEM and ANNA SPOELSTRA (nee Vellenga)</p><p>are happy to announce the 40th anniversary of our parents and grandparents. Their wedding text was taken from John 15:5b: "For apart from me you can do nothing." This text has been a beacon to them for all of their married life. We wish you both much happiness together in the years which lie ahead. With much love from: Tom & Aleida Zeyl — Smithville Derek, David, Thomas, Jonathan Fred & Joanne Spoelstra — Chatham Sarah, Marie, Daniel, Elisabeth John & Wilma Vanderwoerd — Chatham Rachel, Jan, Aleida, Mark Peter & Audrey Spoelstra — Water-down Phillip, Aleida, Erin Bill & Ann Spoelstra — Hamilton There will be an open house on Friday, August 10, 1990, from 7-9 p.m., in the annex of First Chr. Ref Church of Hamilton, located on Charlton St. Best wishes only please. Home address: 103 Burrwood Dr., Hamilton, ON L9C 3T3</p></div>	<div><p>Obituaries</p><p>"I am the resurrection and the life, he who believes in me will live, even though he dies" (John 11:25). On Thursday, June 28, 1990, the Lord called to himself our dear father and grandfather,</p><p>JOHN VELTMAN</p><p>at the age of 80 years. Lovingly remembered by: His wife Lubbijge Children: Evert & Fay Fledderus Henry Postma Luke & Alberta Veltman Henry & Diane Kuipers Albert & Lorie Veltman Alard & Lubbie Banga Lambert & Alice Veltman Bill & Ria Winkelhorst Predeceased by daughter Annie Postma 32 grandchildren and 18 great-grandchildren. Correspondence address: R.R.#1, Consecon, ON Canada K0K 1T0</p></div> <div><p>Anniversaries continued ...</p></div>	<div><p>The Consulate-General would like to come in contact with the following individuals: HOEDT, Nancy: approx. 65-70 yrs. old, lived with two English aunts at Arnhemseweg in Ede, the Neth., during the war. Married to a Canadian. LINDEN, van der, Wilhelmina Maria, may also be known under the name Cooper, born June 14, 1919, at Breda. Immigrated to Canada on August 4, 1983, with possible destination Toronto. NOLET, Maria, approx. 65-70 yrs. old, lived during the war at: Stationsweg in Ede, the Neth. Immigrated to Canada after she got married. SNIPPE, Miss W.J., last known address in Canada: 1230 Radom St., Unit 9, Pickering, Ont. VERMEULEN (nee Ruhl), Johanna Ch., born May 24, 1925, last known address in Canada: 828 Zator Ave., Pickering, ON L1W 1Y2. BLYLEVEN, Johannes Cornelis, born March 23, 1926, immigrated to Canada on June 6, 1952. BOER, Petrus Johannes, born March 9, 1923, immigrated to Canada on May 18, 1961. BRUSZKOWSKI, Kazimier, born March 6, 1925, immigrated to Canada on April 13, 1957. JONK, Nicolaas Hendrikus, born March 5, 1925, immigrated to Canada on July 16, 1959. POOL, Willem Frederik, born March 20, 1927, immigrated to Canada on Feb. 28, 1957. RUTTEN, Wilhelm Hendrik L., born March 26, 1927, immigrated to Canada on April 29, 1954. STEFFAN, Jozef Hubert Louis, born March 19, 1927. ZAPPEIJ, Geertruida, born March 10, 1927, immigrated to Canada on Oct. 15, 1955. KERSSENS, Johannes Petrus, born March 28, 1927, immigrated to Canada on May 4, 1954. KOLIJN, Johan Jozef, born March 10, 1927, immigrated to Canada on Sept. 25, 1954. LANTINGA, Hotze, born Feb. 9, 1926, immigrated to Canada in April 1954. OUDE EGBERINK, Gerda Gezina Maria Jozefina, born March 18, 1925, immigrated to Canada on March 18, 1954. SCHUITEMA, Hilbrandt Albertus Wilhelm, born March 14, 1926, immigrated to Canada on May 11, 1960. SIETZEMA, Hendrik, born Feb. 20, 1925, immigrated to Canada on July 26, 1925. SMIT, Jan Riekele, born March 8, 1925, immigrated to Canada on Feb. 24, 1966. STIKVOORT, Geertrui, born March 14, 1926, immigrated to Canada on Oct. 1, 1965. WEIDE, van der, Petronella, born March 11, 1926, immigrated to Canada on July 16, 1957. GALESLOOT, Theodorus Adrianus Joseph, born March 3, 1925, immigrated to Canada on June 10, 1953. GEEST, van der, Bastiaan, born March 4, 1927, immigrated to Canada on June 3, 1954. GODDERIJ, Bernard, born March 4, 1927, immigrated to Canada on Feb. 27, 1957. GOUDERJAAN, Pieter, born March 7, 1927, immigrated to Canada on April 26, 1957. GREEVE, Jacobus Adrianus, born Jan. 13, 1926, immigrated to Canada on April 12, 1957. HEIDE, v.d., Jacoba Maria Th., born March 28, 1939, immigrated to Canada on May 2, 1978. HENGEL, van, Maarten, born March 29, 1927, immigrated to Canada on July 31, 1946.</p></div> <div><p>Consulate-General of the Netherlands 1 Dundas St. W., Suite #2106, Box 2 Toronto, ON M5G 1Z3</p></div>

Classified

Anniversaries	Anniversaries	Accommodations	Teachers	Help Wanted	
<div></div> <div><p><i>Congratulations to Tjalling (Charles) and Tjitsche (Theresa) Wolters (nee Offringa) who will celebrate, D.V., their 50th wedding anniversary on August 7, 1990.</i></p><p>Arum, Friesland 1940 Trenton, Ontario August 7 1990</p><p>"But David strengthened himself in the Lord his God" (1 Samuel 30:6b). With praise and thanksgiving to our Lord, we rejoice with our parents and grandparents.</p><p>TJALLING (Charles) and TJITSCH (Theresa) WOLTERS (nee Offringa).</p><p>on their 50th wedding anniversary.</p><p>The Lord has blessed our family richly with the gift of dad and mom who have shown us by word and deed what it is to be a follower of Christ. We pray that God will continue to bless you, Dad and Mom, and keep you in his care, and give us many more years of happiness together as a family.</p><p>Love and congratulations from your children and grandchildren:</p><p>Cecil & Laura Wolters — Bowmanville, Ont. three children</p><p>Gerry & Christine Wolters — Trenton, Ont. four children</p><p>Allen & Mary Wolters — Trenton, Ont. three children</p><p>Bart & Jane Smits — Trenton, Ont. four children</p><p>Andy & Willie Wolters — Frankford, Ont. four children</p><p>Harry & Martha DeJong — Sydenham, Ont. three children</p><p>Toby & Tena Smits — Baltimore, Ont. four children</p><p>Mike & Carol Wolters — Trenton, Ont. three children</p><p>Ray & Theresa Dixon — Kingston, Ont. one child</p><p>Charlie & Marlene Wolters — Frankford, Ont. three children</p><p>John & Patricia Wolters — Trenton, Ont. three children</p><p>Dick & Arlene Wolters — Trenton, Ont. two children</p><p>Open house will be held at Ebenezer Chr. Ref. Church, Trenton, Ont., on Saturday, August 11, 1990, from 2:30 - 4:30 p.m. All friends and acquaintances are invited to come and celebrate with us.</p><p>Home address: 57 McGill St., Trenton, ON K8V 3J4</p></div>		<p>Two females are looking for a third person to share living costs in a two-bedroom condo downtown Toronto. \$350-\$400 per month, as of Sept. 1, 1990. Call Brenda at (416) 934-2570.</p> <p>Student accommodation in Guelph. Looking for Christian girls as roommates, starting September 1990. Four-bedroom townhouse, close to bus route. Please contact Barbara Kerkhof at (519) 853-3404 after 6 p.m.</p> <p>Bed & Breakfast: Beautiful Niagara Falls, Ont. A pleasant 15 minute walk to the Falls. Friendly home, nice rooms, superb breakfast! Dutch spoken. Mike and Joan Havinga. Tel. (416) 358-3534.</p>	<p>Teachers</p> <p>BRAMPTON, Ont.: John Knox Christian School invites applications for junior/intermediate positions beginning September 1990. Please send resume and/or inquiries to: Mr. I. Witteveen, John Knox Christian School, 82 McLaughlin Rd. S., Brampton, ON L6Y 2C7. Tel. (416) 451-3236.</p> <p>HOUSTON, B.C.: Houston Christian School has one definite teaching position open for the 1990/91 school year: half-time Kindergarten/half-time Grade 2. Please address all inquiries and applications to Mr. H. Fritschy, Principal, Box 237, Houston, BC V0J 1Z0. Tel.: (604) 845-7736.</p> <p>PRINCE GEORGE, B.C.: Cedars Christian School requires a part-time qualified teacher for the area of Japanese language instruction (0.1-1/2 year). Contact J. Reems at C.C.S., 701 N. Nechako Rd., Prince George, BC V2K 1A2. Phone: (604) 564-0707.</p> <p>STRATHROY, ONT: John Calvin Christian School invites applications for 60% Kindergarten (Monday, Wednesday, Friday) position, beginning September 1990. Please send applications with resume and references to: Mr. H. Wiersema, Principal, 48 York St., Strathroy, ON N7G 2E3. Phone: (519) 245-1934 (school) or (519) 289-5562 (home).</p> <p>STOUFFVILLE, Ont.: Stouffville Christian School requires a teacher for the intermediate/senior division in the area of French, beginning September 1990. Applicants are asked to send resumes to: The Principal, Stouffville Christian School, R.R.#3, Claremont, ON L0H 1E0</p>	<p>Teachers</p> <p>TERRACE, B.C.: Centennial Christian School invites applications from teachers for one opening in the primary department for September 1990. Centennial Christian School is situated in the beautiful Skeena Valley and offers many dynamic opportunities for teachers. Send application, resume and references to: Mr. Frank Voogd, Principal, Centennial Christian School, 3608 Sparks St., Terrace, BC V8G 2V6</p> <p>Vacation</p> <p>Lakewood Christian Campgrounds R.R.#5, Forest, ON N0N 1J0 Phone (519) 899-4415 or (519) 245-1225</p> <p>Lakewood consists of 125 acres of land, ponds, wooded trails, a creek, family camping and group camping area. Large pool facilities. Long nature and hiking trails.</p>	<p>Help Wanted</p> <p>SOCIAL SERVICE WORK — Mutual Support Systems, a network of rural group homes in the Niagara Peninsula for children experiencing emotional and behavioural difficulties invites applications for the position of Child Care Worker. The responsibilities of this live-in position include: involvement in the educational programming of the residents, scheduling daily routines, as well as planning special events, all in a family setting. In-service training provides an excellent opportunity for personal growth and skill development at role modelling, positive relationships and facilitating the residents' successes. Position includes salary and benefits package. Please submit resume to: Personnel Manager, Mutual Support Systems, R.R.#1, Perry Rd., Wellandport, ON L0R 2J0. (416) 899-2311.</p> <p>More Help Wanted and For Sale on next page.</p> <p>Help Wanted</p> <p>Help Wanted</p>
<div><div><div><h3>DIRECTOR OF FINANCE</h3><h4>Christian Reformed Home Missions</h4><p>Home Missions is an agency of the Christian Reformed Church in North America. Home Missions gives leadership to the denomination in its task of bringing the gospel to, and drawing people from Canada and the United States into fellowship with, Christ and his church. Home Missions accomplishes this through new church development and church growth assistance for established Christian Reformed congregations.</p><p>If you believe God has given you the interest and competence to give financial leadership to this organization with a 9.4 million dollar budget ...consider responding by August 20, 1990.</p><p>The Search Committee • c/o Mr. Dale Sall 2850 Kalamazoo Ave., SE • Grand Rapids, MI 49560</p></div></div><div><div><h3>Hamilton District Christian High School</h3><p>Full-time and part-time</p><h4>JANITOR POSITIONS</h4><p>are available beginning Sept. 1, 1990. Working hours can be arranged to suit individual needs. Competitive wages and benefit packages are associated with these positions. Please respond in writing to:</p><p>Mr. J. Vanderkooy 92 Glancaster Rd., R.R.#1, Ancaster, ON L9G 3K9 before Thursday, August 9, 1990, or call (416) 648-6655</p></div></div></div>					
<p>Personal</p> <p>An excellent adventure: World tour of parts known and unknown (England, Israel, Tonga, Russia, etc.). I would like to take a year off to do this trip and am looking for companion(s). Call (519) 395-5006, ask for Adrian.</p> <p>Single Men and Women</p> <p>If you are over 21 years of age and would like to find a partner in Christian marriage, write to: Christian Marriage Contact Service, P.O. Box 1127, Station B, Burlington, ON L7P 3S9. Please enclose \$3.00 for a complete information package explaining our services.</p> <p>Established in 1967.</p>		<p>Summer Job Market</p> <p>PETERBOROUGH, Ont.: I am a business student looking for summer employment, involving accounting, bookkeeping, computers, mathematics, or tutoring anywhere in Ontario. I am available for work from April 23 to Sept. 1. If you are interested, please contact Angela at (705) 295-6942.</p> <p>For Sale</p> <p>Attention Dordt students</p> <p>Two one-way plane tickets available from Buffalo, N.Y. to Sioux Falls, S.D., on August 28, 1990. Call (416) 526-6210 or between July 19 and August 8. (712) 722-4425.</p>	<p>Help Wanted</p> <p>Managing opportunity</p> <p>Bobby Lawn and Pest Control is looking for a sincere and mature Christian person with managing abilities and potential. Year-round employment for the right person. Good pay and benefits. Please call Cor between 8 and 5 at (416) 643-1288 or after hours at (416) 643-3905.</p> <p>Experienced aluminum and vinyl siding installers required for new construction and renovation work. Must have own truck and tools. Year-round local work. Good rates. To apply, call Kielstra Siding & Windows, St. Thomas, Ont., at (519) 631-1012.</p>	<p>Vacation</p> <p>Vacation</p>	

LANG'S RESORT

Cottages and campgrounds

RICE LAKE

Like fishing the big ones? Fully-equipped large (newly-renovated) housekeeping cottages — colour TV, sandy bathing area, rec. hall, new boats and motors, store, live bait, fishing lic., campsites available for weekend, week, or season. Like a clean quiet resort. It's all here at the family place.

Before you book your '90 vacation, take a drive and see our new look. Only 83 miles from Toronto. Write or phone for brochure:

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R.R.#3, Box C, Roseneath, ON
K0K 2X0
Phone: (416) 352-2308

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE
Christian Reformed Home Missions

Home Missions is an agency of the Christian Reformed Church in North America. Home Missions gives leadership to the denomination in its task of bringing the gospel to, and drawing people from Canada and the United States into fellowship with, Christ and his church. Home Missions accomplishes this through new church development and church growth assistance for established Christian Reformed congregations.

If you believe God has given you the interest and competence to give financial leadership to this organization with a 9.4 million dollar budget ... consider responding by August 20, 1990.

The Search Committee • c/o Mr. Dale Sall
2850 Kalamazoo Ave., SE • Grand Rapids, MI 49560

Hamilton District Christian High School

Full-time and part-time

JANITOR POSITIONS

are available beginning Sept. 1, 1990. Working hours can be arranged to suit individual needs. Competitive wages and benefit packages are associated with these positions. Please respond in writing to:

Mr. J. Vanderkooy
92 Glancaster Rd., R.R.#1, Ancaster, ON L9G 3K9
before Thursday, August 9, 1990, or call (416) 648-6655

Vacation

Vacation

LANG'S RESORT
Cottages and campgrounds
RICE LAKE

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Lang's Resort
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Phone: (416) 352-2308

Classified/ Events

FOR SALE

Grand Valley, Ont.

Detached four-bedroom brick and aluminum maintenance free, two-storey home on quiet cul-de-sac. Main floor family room, large cedar deck, double garage with automatic opener, central air conditioning, plus much more. Close to shopping, library and community sports centre. A two minute walk to the Canadian Reformed Church. Asking \$192,000 or best offer.

Phone: (519) 928-5559

Grace Christian Reformed Church

Scarborough (Toronto), Ont., Canada

is expanding its Team Ministry by the addition, to its staff, of a

YOUTH MINISTER

We are looking for an enthusiastic person, who will help us lead, equip and challenge our youth to serve the Lord with joy. We will send you a Grace Church Information Packet upon request, or upon receipt of your application and resume.

Search Committee
c/o John Van Dyk

Grace Christian Reformed Church
25 Channel Nine Court, Agincourt, ON M1S 4B5

NEEDED!

Someone warm and personable, to assist in the pastoral ministry of calling and counselling at

First Church, Calgary, Alberta

a dynamic, celebrational, Christian Reformed Church. This is a part-time position, either short-term or long-term, especially suited to a retired or semi-retired pastor.

If interested and available, please contact
First Christian Reformed Church
3600 - 15A Street S.W.
Calgary, AB Canada T2T 5P8
Phone: (403) 243-2244

Weekly Crossword

by James E. Hinish Jr.

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Last Week's Puzzle

PAWN	DOUSE	DAHL
ACHE	EASEL	ALAI
STIR	BRAN	DEFFIN
SETOUTS	DASTARD	
ELKS	JENA	
ABTIE	MAR	GATES
DOR	SOON	RESENT
AREA	DAISY	PATE
ROADED	TEAM	BEL
ENDOR	CDX	AFIRE
IGOR	ORES	
SPEAKER	ATTACKS	
MELT	TOAST	SUIT
OPAL	ANNIE	TILE
GONE	TATAR	STOW

- | | | | |
|------------------|------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Down | 26 Movie critic | 43 Food holder | 51 Walked |
| 2 Captain's call | 27 Eating place | 44 Intuits | 52 Food holders |
| 3 Actor Parker | 28 Haul | 46 Weapon | 53 Fed. agcy. |
| 4 Roadside sign | 29 Indifferent | 47 Skinfint | 54 Kazakh and Uzbek e.g. |
| 5 Needlelike | 30 Soap plant | 48 Store | 55 Bravo or Grande |
| | 31 Hair | 49 Tramp | |
| | 32 treatment | 50 Sp. lady | |
| | 33 Radius | | |
| | 34 Part of HI | | |
| | 35 Lunch counter | | |
| | 36 Beneficiary | | |

Calendar of Events

- | | | | |
|-------------------|--|--------------------|--|
| July 28 | J.J. Variety Show, 8:30 a.m. on CHEX-TV Channel 12. Fun for everyone. Entertainment for Christians. | Sept. 9 | Dutch service with Rev. R. Koops, at 3 p.m., CRC, Ancaster, Ont. |
| July 29 | Dutch service with Rev. H. de Moor, at 3 p.m., CRC, Ancaster, Ont. | Sept. 13 | CFFO Prov. Board meets from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., CRC, Georgetown, Ont. For info. call (519) 837-1620 (a.m.) or 338-3214 (p.m.). |
| Aug. 3-6 | Annual ICS Niagara Family Conference, Fort Erie, Ont. Theme: "Creation Waits: Living Faithfully in our Ailing Environment." For info. call: (416) 979-2331. | Sept. 15 | Second National Capital Region Holy Spirit Conference, The Life Centre, Ottawa, Ont. For info. call (416) 890-3222. |
| Aug. 3-6 | "Young People Weekend" at Lakewood Chr. Campground, Forest, Ont. | Sept. 15 | Annual Ontario CRC School Convention, from 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m., at the CRC, Willowdale, Ont. For info. call (519) 884-6044. |
| Aug. 8 | Organ recital by John W. Vandertuin, 8 p.m., Aeolian Hall, London, Ont. | Sept. 18-22 | Visit the food booth of Woodland Chr. High School (Cambridge chapter) at this year's plowing match near Paris, Ont. |
| Aug. 11 | Beef barbeque and music at Lakewood Chr. Campground, Forest, Ont. | Sept. 21-22 | "Sola Scriptura," First Annual Toronto Conference on Reformed Theology, at the Airport Skyline Hotel, Toronto, Ont. Speakers: James I. Packer, Roger R. Nicole and Ronald M. Gleason. For info. call Richard Van Seters at (416) 477-2266 or Fax (416) 477-2268. |
| Aug. 16-19 | "Canadian Christian Festival III — A Time to Love," at the Metro Centre and World Trade & Convention Centre, Halifax, N.S. About 10,000 people are expected to attend. Speakers include Desmond Tutu, Tony Campolo, John Powell, Elizabeth Thomen, Emilio Castro, Pauline Webb, T. Herbert O'Driscoll and others. For info. call (902) 423-9670. | Sept. 21-22 | All-Ontario Conference of Committee of Concerned Members of the CRC. At Maranatha CRC, Woodstock, Ont. Theme: "God's Word in a changing world." For info. call (416) 562-5196. |
| Aug. 16 | "Senior Citizens' Day" at Lakewood Chr. Campground, Forest, Ont. | | |
| Aug. 20-24 | "Teaching the Holocaust in the Canadian Context: Engaging the Heart and Mind," a conference for educators at the U. of T., Toronto, Ont. For info. call Pnina Spetgang, | | |

COMMITTEE OF CONCERNED MEMBERS

of the

CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

Second All-Ontario Conference

September 21, 22, 1990

Maranatha Woodstock CRC

Speakers: Rev. Jerome Julien
THE INSPIRATION OF THE WORD
Dr. Cornel Venema
THE AUTHORITY OF THE WORD
Rev. John Piersma
THE SUFFICIENCY OF THE WORD

— Watch for Announcements!! —

Mid-America Reformed Seminary

invites you to their annual

Seminary Festival

activities on Thursday, August 30, 1990.

At 2:00 p.m. Rev. Nelson D. Kloosterman will deliver the Convocation address. An Association Meeting will be held at 3:30 p.m. The evening meal will be served from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. The Rev. John H. Piersma of Lansing, Ill., will give the Festival address at 7:30 p.m. All the activities will be held at the Calvary Christian Reformed Church of Orange City, IA.

Second Annual

Worship and "Cell"-ebration Conference

to give assistance in worship and cell group leadership.

Friday, Sept. 21, 1990, 7:00 p.m.
to Saturday, Sept. 22, 1990, 4:30 p.m.

WHAT? Worship, praise, teaching, workshops on worship and cell groups.

PARTICIPANTS? Pastors Al VandeGriend, Henry Lunshof, Henry Wildeboer, Karl House, Mike Abma, Ron Fisher plus worship leaders, musicians, etc.

FOR? pastors, elders, worship committee members, cell group leaders and organizers.

COST? \$35 per person (only \$30 if registered by Sept. 1). Enrolment is limited.

INFORMATION? A letter and brochures were sent to each CRC Council in Ontario. Ask your pastor or clerk OR write or call the sponsoring church.

Zion Chr. Ref. Church
409 Adelaide Ave., E.
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Church news

Christian Reformed Church

Calls received

— As associate pastor of Smithers, B.C., and to set up a pastoral care centre, Rev. Jack S. Hielema, director of studies for Middle East Ministries.

To Redeemer, Sarnia, Ont., Rev. Kornelis De Koning of Emmanuel, Calgary, Alta.

To Immanuel, Brampton, Ont., Rev. Herman Praamsma, intern at the Ontario Correctional Institute, Brampton, Ont.

Calls accepted

To Bethel, Newmarket, Ont., Rev. William Dykstra of First, Chatham, Ont.

Books

Robert VanderVennen, book review editor

Theology

Collected addresses of Jelle Faber

Essays in Reformed Doctrine, by Jelle Faber. Neerlandia, Alta.: Inheritance Publications, 1990. Softcover, 302 pp., \$19.95. Reviewed by John Valk, campus pastor in Fredericton, New Brunswick.

To publish a collection of essays on Reformed doctrine in the 1990s is perhaps somewhat risky. Interest in theological doctrines and debates, especially those emanating from a distant past, is not at a particular high among the general (church) populace today. Whether that is as it should be is quite apart from the matter. Nonetheless, it is a tremendous task to present Reformed doctrine in a manner that generates enthusiasm, so that insights of the past can still come to bear on the problems and concerns of the present. *Essays in Reformed Doctrine* has not, unfortunately, sufficiently accomplished that task.

The book is a collection of essays and articles; most were previously published elsewhere. Some were initially published in Dutch and appear here for the first time in English. Many were originally addresses given at conferences, church gatherings, or openings, anniversaries or convocations of the Canadian Reformed Theological College. They have been compiled and published here in book form on the occasion of Faber's retirement as principal

and professor of dogmatology of that college, located in Hamilton.

The book includes topics of wide range. The first number of articles deal with incarnation and Christology. The middle group focuses on ecclesiology: the catholic character, doctrine, boundaries and kingdom of the Church. The last part of the book deals with Calvin and his view of the image of God and the Holy Spirit.

Some of the material in the book is rather dated. Thirteen of the 17 essays (chapters) stem from the 1970s and earlier. Many of the more crucial footnotes, even in the more recent articles, are also rather dated. Some material is repeated, almost verbatim.

In many cases Faber engages in discussions that are rather polemical, sometimes with a vitriolic edge. The manner in which he dismisses the views of, for example, Allan Verhey, Leonard Verduin and H.J. Westernink borders on arrogance. He is less than charitable towards Anabaptists, and Catholics become members of the "popish church." Catholic theologians and doctrinal positions are reduced to mere "opinion." Ecumenical sympathies, pervasive among many churches and theologians, is lost on Faber. In fact, one can trace in the book a continued defence of the *Vrijmaking* (Liberation) which occurred in the *Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland*

(Netherlands Reformed Churches) in 1944, and the formation of the Canadian Reformed Churches in this country. One is not surprised, therefore, to see frequent mention of Klaas Schilder.

I found the book rather disappointing, and in places, uninteresting. Faber is not always clear in his theological terminology, in his explanation of the so-called "traditional Reformed position," or in his scriptural citations. One is sometimes left guessing, or wondering, at the implied intent. Some of the debates seem rather far removed from the more pressing concerns of today — to which Reformed doctrine can undoubtedly contribute great insights. Only the last essays on Calvin's view of the image of God seemed to have relevant things to say for the present.

There is, nonetheless, merit in publishing in a new format the various works of Faber, not least in that it gives us insight into the areas that remain of great concern for theologians and members of the Canadian Reformed Churches. The book presents itself well, with a good table of contents, chapter headings, sub-headings, footnotes at the bottom of the page, and two very thorough indices. *Essays in Reformed Doctrine* will undoubtedly be important to those who have been closely associated with Faber, to serve as a reminder of a scholar dedicated to the cause of the Canadian Reformed Churches.



Friends of God

Wayne Brouwer

The only way out

"Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me, for in you my soul takes refuge" (Ps. 57:1).

There's an old legend that makes its rounds through the countries of the Middle East. A wealthy man sent his servant to the markets one morning on a number of business matters. But in just a short while the servant came rushing home. He was panting and sweating and glanced back over his shoulder as he ran in.

"Here, here!" said the Master. "What's wrong?!" And the servant told how he'd been doing his thing at the markets, minding his own business, when all at once he bumped up against a stranger. They turned and looked at each other and the servant knew who the other fellow was: it was Death himself!

The servant was scared sick! "I'm sure he was looking for me! Please, Master, send me away to my family in Damascus!"

Well, the Master had little choice. His servant was beside himself with terror. So he gave the man a horse and he sent him on his way.

But the business in the markets still had to be done. So this time, the Master went himself. And while he was there, moving through the crowds, he bumped up against a stranger too! And when they turned to look at each other the Master saw that it was indeed Death himself!

So he says to Death, "You sure gave my servant a scare this morning!"

And Death says, "Well, actually, I was surprised to see him there. I'm scheduled to meet him tonight in Damascus!"

Surprise!

No escape

Sometimes it seems as if there's no getting away from a bad thing. In the mid-1800s, Dutch immigrant pastor and community leader Albertus Van Raalte watched his little colony in western Michigan disintegrate under the ravages of disease and death. One Sunday morning, in the middle of his congregational prayer, he broke down. Sobbing and throwing his hands toward the heavens he shouted, "Oh God! Must we all die?!"

It doesn't happen to us every day, but certainly there are times when each of us goes through that agony. And it's one thing to experience trouble and torment when you've been living an ungodly existence. You know then that you're getting what you deserve. But it's quite another thing to be so close to God, as David was, and still to feel such pain and frustration each day. The spectre of Death bumped up against him in the marketplace. And if he ran to the land of the Philistines it followed him right into the caves where he took refuge.

You can almost see him with Van Raalte's tear-stained cheeks and swollen eyes, shouting toward heaven, "Oh God! Is there no relief?!"

Amazing grace

And because of those pressures there is something incredible, something mind-blowing, something absolutely amazing about the contrasting strength, peace and confidence that also springs from his lips and pen. "My heart is steadfast, O God ..., I will sing and make music Great is your love ...!"

For David has learned the fundamental secret to living on the edge of cruelty, pain, spite, injury and death. He has learned that only a God who has ultimate control over all these things could make life itself meaningful. Only a God who allowed the miseries for a time, as a parent might restrain a helping hand so that a child can grow through the struggles of development, only that kind of God could finally bring all things into his larger plans for peace, joy and harmony.

Wayne Brouwer is a pastor at First Christian Reformed Church in London, Ont.

FROM COAST TO COAST

BRITISH COLUMBIA			NOVA SCOTIA		
Abbotsford-CFVR	7:30 am	850	Digby-CKDY	6:00 am	1420
Burns Lake-CFLD	9:15am	1400	Kentville-CKEN	8:30am	1490
Kitimat-CKTK	8:30 am	1230	Middleton-CKAD	8:30am	1350
Osoyoos-CKOO	8:30am	1490	New Glasgow-CKEC	7:30am	1320
Penticton-CKOK	8:30am	800	Sydney-CJCB	8:00am	1270
Port Alberni-CJAV	10:30 am	1240	Weymouth-CKDY	8:30am	103.1
Prince George-CIBC	8:30am	94.3	Windsor-CFAB	8:30am	1450
Princeton-CKRP	8:30am	1460	ONTARIO		
Smithers-CFBV	9:15am	1230	Ajax-CHOO	9:30am	1390
Summerland-CKSP	8:30am	1450	Atikokan-CFAK	10:30am	1240
Vancouver-CJVB	9:00am	1470	Burlington-CING(fm)	7:30pm	107.9
Vernon-CJIB	9:30pm	940	Chatham-CFCO	9:30pm	630
ALBERTA			Guelph-CJOY	9:00pm	1460
Brooks-CKBR	8:00 am	1340	Hamilton-CHAM	7:30am	820
Edmonton-CHQT	7:30am	880	Kapuskasing-CKAP	9:00am	580
Edson-CJYR	10:00am	970	Kingston-CFMK	10:00am	96.3
Ft. McMurray-CJOK	8:30 am	1230	Newmarket-CKAN	8:00am	1480
St. Albert-CHMG	7:00 am	1070	Oshawa-CKAR	8:00 am	1350
Taber-CKTA	8:00am	1570	Owen Sound-CFOS	10:30am	560
MANITOBA			Pembroke-CHRO		
Altona-CFAM	9:30am	950	(Sat.)	6:30pm	1350
Steinbach-CHM	9:30am	1250	Pembroke-CHRO	10:00am	1350
Winnipeg-CKJS	9:15am	810	Slt. Ste. Marie-CFYN	10:00am	1050
NEW BRUNSWICK			St. Catharines-CKTB	10:00 pm	610
Fredericton-CFNB	6:30am	550	Sarnia-CHOK	7:30am	1070
Newcastle-CFAN	9:00am	790	Stratford-CJCS	8:45am	1240
Saint John-CHSJ	9:00am	700	Windsor-CKLW	9:00am	800
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND			Wingham-CKNX	10:30am	920
Charlottetown-CFCY	7:00am	630	Woodstock-CKDK(fm)	8:00am	102.3
QUEBEC			FAITH 20-TV		
Montreal-CFQR(fm)	7:30am	92.5	Global TV Network		
THE BACK TO GOD HOUR			Ontario: Mon.-Fri. 5:30 a.m.		
			VISION CANADA		
			(every Saturday)		
			B.C.	4 and 7 p.m.	
			Alta.	5 and 8 p.m.	
			Sask. and Man.	6 and 9 p.m.	
			Ont. and Que.	7 and 10 p.m.	
			Nfld., N.B., N.S. and P.E.I.	8 and 11 p.m.	
			FRENCH-RADIO PERSPECTIVES REFORMEES		
			ONTARIO		
			CFIX-Cornwall	9:30 am	1170
			CRCL-Timmins	9:30 am	620
			QUEBEC		
			CHRS-Montreal	8:00 am	1090
			Valleyfield-CFLV	8:45 am	1370



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